GOOD ARGUMENTATION
WITH THE DOUBTERS OF ISALM

from the Qur'an, the Torah, the Gospels & Science

الرد الجميل
على المشككين في الإسلام

من القرآن والتوراة والإنجيل والعلم

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Dar Al-Manarah

For Translation, Publishing & Distribution

First edition: 1421 / 2001

Second edition: 1425 / 2005

Dar Al Kotob Library Number: 2000 / 17041
I.S.B.N 977 – 6005 – 06- 3

Dar Al-Manarah

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

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Translator's Note

Praise be to Allah. We thank Him, seek His Help and His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evils within ourselves and that of our bad deeds. He whom Allah guides, is truly guided, and whom he Allah leaves to stray, none can guide him. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is His final Prophet.

In fact, the task of translation is not an easy one. Rather, it is a tremendous one, particularly when it is related to religion. So, I ask Allah to forgive my sins and dedicate this work for His Sake.

In the process of translation, I have read and studied some well-reputed books that deal with the same field of this work so as to be as consistent as possible.

However, I would like to draw the attention of the readers to the following points:

A) This translation is not literal one.Rath it is an abridged translation.

B) The translation of the Qur'anic verses are quoted from Yusuf \`Ali's translation of *The Holy Qur'an*.

C) WhenI see it is necessary to clarify or comment on something I put it between square brackets: [T.].

Finally, all praise is due to Allah, without Whose help and guidance nothing can be accomplished.

Translator

Wa'il `Abdul Mut`aal Shihab

Editor's Note

Islam, the religion of Allah, is originally the only comprehensive system of life, but we have forgotten many of its genuine aspects that give it supremacy over any other code or system ever originated by man. This is, first and foremost, due to the fact that it is the system set up by Allah, the Almighty, Who knows all about His creation. Since the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and still, doubts and misconceptions are raised against Islam at the hands of its enemies. In fact, history does not mention any interval of time in which their plotting and scheming against Islam have been paused.

Indeed, they exert themselves in the attempt of distorting and soiling the image of Islam before the eyes of the followers of their own dogmas and even to empty Islam of its genuine and fundamental aspects of glory and beauty before the eyes of its own adherents and followers. And, in fact, they were successful in so doing.

Nevertheless, their never-ceasing assaults forced us to take the defensive position. But, I think that is enough. We will no longer attempt to be apologetic, for Islam needs no apology. Nor will there be any intention to appease, condemn, or flatter anybody, because Islam does not tolerate

such things but commands a straightforward course of thought as well as deed.

However, what attracted me most through editing this workwas the fact that our knowledgeable author, sheikh `A. Subh, has shown himself to bear such an attitude in mind in his section of refuting and arguing with them. He counterattacked those attackers, basing his refutations on texts and quotations exerted not only from the Glorious Qur'an and the Prophetic *Sunnah*, but also from their own gospels and Holy books.

Here, I would like to thank my brother, Wa'il Shihab, translator of this book, on his great confidence and trust in me. I hope I can come up to his expectations and carry out this tremendous task – editing this work – in a way that pleases Almighty Allah, His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and all faithful Believers whose hearts burn upon hearing the distortions raised about Islam, the true religion of Allah.

Finally, all praise and thanks are due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. And, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon Prophet Muhammad and upon his family, his Companions, and his followers until the Day of Judgment.

Editor

`Ali El-Sayed El-Halwany

Preface

All praise is due to Allah and much peace and many blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah, his family, his Companions, his followers and those who disseminate his call until the Day of Judgment.

In fact, it is incumbent upon every Muslim to call people to Islam and defend it against the attacks of its enemies who, intentionally or unintentionally, defame its image. Therefore, every Muslim is required to get himself well-acquainted with the conspiracies of the enemies of Islam. He should, therefore, equip himself with all means that enable him to refute all distortions that non-Muslims try to attribute to Islam.

The book in hand is devoted to this very aim, namely refuting the distortions that non-Muslims strive to defame the image of Islam thereby. So, we hope that this book will promote a better under-standing of Islam all over the world.

Also, we ask our beloved readers to read this valuable book with attentive minds so as to get the benefit therefrom.

Dar Al-Manarah feels indebted to **Sheik `A. Subh** for giving it the chance to present this valuable work to our English-speaking readers.

Also, we would like to thank **W. Shihab** for his efforts in translating and revising this work. Great appreciation is due also to **`Ali El-Halawany**, our editor, under whose guidance and supervision the subject matter took form.

Finally, all praise and thanks are due to Allah, Most High.

Dar Al-Manarah Director

Muhammad `Uthman

Foreword

Allah, Most High, says,

﴿قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَعِظُكُم بِوَاحِدَةٍ أَن تَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ مَثْنَى وَفُرَادَى ثُمَّ تَتَفَكَّرُوا
مَا بِصَاحِبِكُم مِّن جِنَّةٍ إِنْ هُوَ إِلاَّ نَذِيرٌ لَّكُم بَيْنَ يَدَيْ عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ
(٤٦) قُلْ مَا سَأَلْتُكُم مِّنْ أَجْرٍ فَهُوَ لَكُمْ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلاَّ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَهُوَ
عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ (٤٧) قُلْ إِنَّ رَبِّي يَقْذِفُ بِالْحَقِّ عَلاَّمُ الْغُيُوبِ
(٤٨) قُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَمَا يُبْدِئُ الْبَاطِلُ وَمَا يُعِيدُ (٤٩)﴾ [سبأ]

﴿*Say: 'I do admonish you on one point: that ye do stand up before Allah - (it may be) in pairs, or (it may be) singly – and reflect (within yourselves): your Companion is not possessed: he is no less than a Warner to you, in face of a terrible Penalty.' Say: 'No reward do I ask of you: it is (all) in your interest: my reward is only due from Allah: and He is Witness to all things.' Say: 'Verily my Lord doth cast the (mantle of) Truth (over His servants), He that has full knowledge of (all) that is hidden.' Say: 'The Truth has arrived, and Falsehood neither creates anything new, nor restores anything.'*﴾ (Saba': 46-49)

﴿ هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَى وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ
كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ (٣٣)﴾ [التوبة]

﴾*It is He Who hath sent His Messenger with Guidance and the Religion of Truth, toy proclaim it over all religion, even though the Pagans may detest (it).*﴿

(At-Tawbah: 33)

In his *Rasa'il*, Al-Jahiz commented on the above Qur'anic verse, saying, "The simple form of proclamation is to refute the claims and show the falsehood of those who defame it (religion)."

Apparently, the aforementioned Qur'anic verses call people to steer clear of whims and inclinations that may corrupt one's sincerity in seeking the truth, and to free their minds and will of that which may hinder them from following the straight path. The verses, also, comprise a promise of the domination of Islam, the true religion.

Allah, Most High, has fulfilled His promise. History bears undisputed witness on behalf of this fact for the faithful and fair-minded persons who seek only the truth.

Introduction

The book in hand is based on a certain occasion. During my visit to USA, on 21 December, 1997, as I was invited by the board of administrators of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq Mosque in Brooklyn, New York, my intimate friend, Hamid Nabawi, presented some questions to me. These questions were sent by some Christian missionaries intending to distort the image of Islam and challenge Muslims thereby. Undoubtedly, their attempts were in vain for they behaved like a naive man who strikes a piece of steel with his head thinking he could split it.

It is noteworthy that the challenge of these Christian missionaries was supported by the following two factors:

a) Those missionaries have gotten partial knowledge of Islam, which, in turn, led them astray. Generally speaking, when knowledge adheres to whims, it will be more harmful than ignorance itself.

b) The opponents of these missionaries have had no profound knowledge of Islam. They shouldered the task of defending Islam due to the lack of outstanding scholars in their countries. Their shortcomings, however,

were revealed in many aspects. Following are some of these:

1- They were not well-acquainted with their status quo as well as their beliefs.
2- They erroneously thought that all those who disagreed with them in following their religion, Islam, had to be fought, killed, and boycotted. In so doing, they would defame the image of Islam.
3- Their women's state reflected their misunderstanding of Islam. Rather, what they used to acquire from Western women who wanted to know Islam presented their unawareness of the characteristics of Islam, even unwillingly and with good intention.

The above-mentioned aspects are not mere imagination, but everyone could behold them through personal experience.

The weakness of the opponents' argumentation resulted in reinforcing the position of those missionaries to the extent that the latter would be tempted to increase their insults and rather feel that they would have the upper hand in the combat with Muslims; yet they were powerless and misled by the weakness of the former.

Due to his good-thinking of me, dear honorable brother in Islam, Hamid Nabawi, asked me to start refuting the false claims and distortions of those Christian missionaries so as to highlight the truth and show the real essence of Islam.

I hope I could come up to his expectations and carry out this tremendous task, which is so difficult that a man like me could hardly fulfill.

However, keeping in mind the fact that *Jihad* and defending Islam by means of speech and writing become *Fard `Ayn* (Individual duty), that Allah is the Owner of Majesty and Generosity Who grants victory to the devout person, and that truth is evident and falsehood is of groundless basis, leads me to go on the path of truth believing that Allah alone can guide whom He wills to the straight path.

Islam, in itself, is light that comprises no darkness and plain truth that embraces no falsehood; but sight, due to blindness or unconsciousness, may not be able to see the manifest light of the sun in a sunny shining day. Therefore, the attempts and conspiracies of the deviated people could by no means blemish Islam and its Messenger or tarnish their image. Addressing His Messenger in the Glorious Qur'an, Allah, Most High, says,

﴿فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّكَ عَلَى الحَقِّ المُبِينِ (٧٩) إِنَّكَ لاَ تُسْمِعُ المَوْتَى وَلاَ تُسْمِعُ الصُّمَّ الدُّعَاءَ إِذَا وَلَّوْا مُدْبِرِينَ (٨٠) وَمَا أَنْتَ بِهَادِي العُمْيِ عَن ضَلاَلَتِهِمْ إِن تُسْمِعُ إِلاَّ مَن يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا فَهُم مُّسْلِمُونَ (٨١)﴾ [النمل]

﴿*So put thy trust in Allah: for thou art on (the Path of) manifest Truth. Truly thou canst not*

cause the dead to listen, nor canst thou cause the deaf to hear the call, (especially) when they turn back in retreat. Nor canst thou be a guide to the blind, (to prevent them) from straying: only those wilt thou get to listen who believe in Our Signs, and they will bow in Islam.﴿

(An-Naml: 79-81)

Thus, the aforementioned circumstances have motivated me to write down these papers with the intention of drawing the attention of Muslims, particularly those who live in the West, to the appropriate way of understanding and dealing with non-Muslims. Also, this work proves the existence of the Islamic identity and paves the way for those who seek honor by means of sticking firmly to this religion, Islam.

To achieve these goals, I have divided this book into two chapters:

Chapter One: The Rules and Methodology of Argumentation Adopted by the Glorious Qur'an in Contrast with the Methodology of the Christian Missionaries.

Chapter Two: Distortions about Islam: The Questions and Claims of the Christian Missionaries and Refuting Them.

`*A. H. Subh*

New York, January, 1998

CHAPTER ONE

The Rules and Methodology of Argumentation Adopted by the Glorious Qur'an in Contrast with the Methodology of the Christian Missionaries

In this chapter, I will try to shed light on and analyze the following points:

1- The Glorious Qur'an adopts the sound argumentation and lays down its rules and methodology, and explains its fruits.
2- Those who distort Islam do not adhere to a sound methodology.
3- How should we deal with those who violate the rules of sound argumentation?
4- Those who distort Islam are blind imitators.
5- But, still there are fair-minded persons.
6- The goals of the Christian missionaries.
7- Christian missionaries should examine their own scriptures and books before defaming ours?

The Glorious Qur'an Adopts the Sound Argumentation

The Glorious Qur'an, the Book of Allah, adopts the sound argumentation and lays down its rules and methodology, and explains its fruits.

It is taken for granted that intellectuals' and scholars' meetings and argumentation lead mostly to knowing the truth. More specifically, such meetings and argumentation will be more fruitful when held between intellectuals and scholars of different religions.

Thus, meetings and argumentation with people of other religions with the intention of virtuous cooperation and knowing each other is recommended in the Glorious Qur'an. These meetings and argumentation should be held for seeking the truth and not merely for defaming others.

To the best of my knowledge, there is no heavenly book that permits argumentation with other faiths and lays down certain ethics and rules to govern it as the Glorious Qur'an does. Argumentation in the Glorious Qur'an is admitted even for the angels. In more than one verse, the Glorious Qur'an speaks about the angels' questions to Allah, Most High, regarding the goal of man's creation and his vicegerency on earth in spite of his mischief therein. In *Surat* Al-Baqarah, for, example, the Glorious Qur'an records the following argument between Allah, Most High, and the angels,

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا
أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ
وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لاَ تَعْلَمُونَ (٣٠) وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الأَسْمَاءَ
كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى المَلائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلاءِ إِن
كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (٣١) قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لاَ عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلاَّ مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ
أَنْتَ العَلِيمُ الحَكِيمُ (٣٢) قَالَ يَا آدَمُ أَنْبِئْهُم بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ فَلَمَّا أَنْبَأَهُم

بِأَسْـمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُل لَّكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ (٣٣)﴾ [البقرة]

﴿*Behold, thy Lord said to the angels: 'I will create a vicegerent on earth.' They said: 'Wilt Thou place therein one who will make mischief therein and shed blood? - whilst we do celebrate Thy praises and glorify Thy holy (name)?' He said: 'I know what ye know not.' And He taught Adam the names of all things; then He placed them before the angels, and said: 'Tell Me the names of these if ye are right.' They said: 'Glory be to Thee: of knowledge we have none, save what Thou hast taught us: in truth it is Thou Who art perfect in knowledge and wisdom.' He said: 'O Adam! Tell them their names.' When he had told them, Allah said: 'Did I not tell you that I know the secrets of heaven and earth, and I know what ye reveal and what ye conceal?'*﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 30-33)

Moreover, the Glorious Qur'an admits man's argumentation with Allah, Most High, on the Day of Judgment, saying,

﴿وَيَـوْمَ نَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعاً ثُمَّ نَقُولُ لِلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا أَيْنَ شُرَكَاؤُكُمُ الَّذِيـنَ كُنتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ (٢٢) ثُمَّ لَمْ تَكُن فِتْنَتُهُمْ إِلاَّ أَن قَالُوا وَاللَّهِ رَبِّنَا مَا كُنَّا مُشْرِكِينَ (٢٣) انظُرْ كَيْفَ كَذَبُوا عَلَى أَنفُسِهِمْ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ (٢٤)﴾ [الأنعام]

﴿*One day shall we gather them all together: We shall say to those who ascribed partners (to Us): 'Where are the partners whom ye (invented and) talked about?' There will then be (left) no subterfuge for them but to say: 'By Allah our Lord, we were not those who joined gods with Allah.' Behold how they lie against their own souls but the (lie) which they invented will leave them in the lurch.*﴾

(Al-An`am: 22-24)

﴿يَوْمَ تَأْتِي كُلُّ نَفْسٍ تُجَادِلُ عَن نَّفْسِهَا وَتُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ وَهُمْ لاَ يُظْلَمُونَ (١١١)﴾ [النمل]

﴿*One day every soul will come up struggling for itself, and every soul will be recompensed for all its actions, and none will be unjustly dealt with.*﴾

(An-Nahl: 111)

Likewise, argumentation in the field of religion is passable. This is apparent when the Glorious Qur'an states the story of the Prophet Ibrahim (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

We, people of heavenly-revealed religions, can revive the methodology of our ancestor, Ibrahim (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), through objective and fair discussions and argumentation. According to the Glorious Qur'an, Ibrahim (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was the founder of intellectual argu-

mentation regarding belief and faith. In five different places, the Glorious Qur'an refers to the argumentation of Ibrahim (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) with his people. In *Surat* Al-An`am, the Glorious Qur'an states Ibrahim's argumentation with his people and focuses on the fact that although Ibrahim (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) never doubted the existence of his Lord, the Creator, he tried to convince his people that their gods were false and logically of no avail. In doing so, he reflected on their deities – planets, the moon and the sun – and pretended to be thinking of their validity. He proved that their deities were in vain because they change from time to time. The Glorious Qur'an unequivocally states this story, saying,

﴿وَكَذَلكَ نُرِي إبْرَاهيمَ مَلَكُوتَ السَّمَوَات وَالأَرْض وَليَكُونَ منَ
المُوقنينَ (٧٥) فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْه اللَّيْلُ رَأَى كَوْكَباً قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي فَلَمَّا
أَفَلَ قَالَ لاَ أُحبُّ الآفلينَ (٧٦) فَلَمَّا رَأَى القَمَرَ بَازغاً قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي
فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَئن لَّمْ يَهْدني رَبِّي لأَكُونَنَّ منَ القَوْم الضَّالِّينَ (٧٧)
فَلَمَّا رَأَى الشَّمْسَ بَازغَةً قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي هَذَا أَكْبَرُ فَلَمَّا أَفَلَتْ قَالَ يَا
قَوْم إنِّي بَريءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْركُونَ (٧٨) إنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهيَ للَّذي فَطَرَ
السَّمَوَات وَالأَرْضَ حَنيفاً وَمَا أَنَا منَ المُشْركينَ (٧٩) وَحَاجَّهُ قَوْمُهُ
قَـــالَ أَتُحَاجُّونِّي في اللَّه وَقَدْ هَدَان وَلاَ أَخَافُ مَا تُشْركُونَ به إلاَّ
أَن يَشَاءَ رَبِّي شَيْئاً وَسعَ رَبِّي كُلَّ شَيْءٍ علْماً أَفَلاَ تَتَذَكَّرُونَ (٨٠)

وَكَـــيْفَ أَخَافُ مَا أَشْرَكْتُمْ وَلاَ تَخَافُونَ أَنَّكُمْ أَشْرَكْتُم بِاللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهِ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَاناً فَأَيُّ الفَرِيقَيْنِ أَحَقُّ بِالأَمْنِ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨١﴾ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُم بِظُلْمٍ أُوْلَئِكَ لَهُمُ الأَمْنُ وَهُم مُّهْـــتَدُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾ وَتِلْـــكَ حُجَّتُــنَا آتَيْنَاهَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَلَى قَوْمِهِ نَرْفَعُ دَرَجَاتٍ مَّن نَّشَاءُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٨٣﴾﴾ [الأنعام]

﴿*So also did we show Abraham the power and the laws of the heavens and the earth, that he might (with understanding) have certitude. When the night covered him over, he saw a star: he said: 'This is my Lord.' But when it set, he said: 'I love not those that set.' When he saw the moon rising in splendour, he said: 'This is my Lord.' But when the moon set, he said: 'Unless my Lord guide me, I shall surely be among those who go astray.' When he saw the sun rising in splendour, he said: 'This is my Lord; this is the greatest (of all).' But when the sun set, he said: 'O my people I am indeed free from your (guilt) of giving partners to Allah. For me, I have set my face, firmly and truly, towards Him Who created the heavens and the earth, and never shall I give partners to Allah.' His people disputed with him. He said: '(Come) ye to dispute with me, about Allah, when He (Himself) hath guided me? I fear not (the beings) ye associate with Allah: unless my Lord willeth, (nothing can happen).*

My Lord comprehendeth in His knowledge all things. Will ye not (yourselves) be admonished? How should I fear (the beings) ye associate with Allah, when ye fear not to give partners to Allah without any warrant having been given to you? Which of (us) two parties hath more right to security? (Tell me) if ye know. It is those who believe and confuse not their beliefs with wrong that are (truly) in security, for they are on (right) guidance.' That was the reasoning about us, which we gave to Abraham (to use) against his people: We raise whom We will, degree after degree: for thy Lord is full of wisdom and knowledge.﴾

(Al-An`am: 75-83)

In more than one place, the Glorious Qur'an narrates the argumentation of Ibrahim (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) with his people and their ruler. In *Surat* Maryam, the Glorious Qur'an narrates the argumentation of Ibrahim with his father, saying,

﴿وَاذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ صِدِّيقاً نَّبِياًّ (٤١) إِذْ قَالَ لأَبِيهِ
يَــا أَبَتِ لِمَ تَعْبُدُ مَا لاَ يَسْمَعُ وَلاَ يُبْصِرُ وَلاَ يُغْنِي عَنكَ شَيْئاً (٤٢)
يَا أَبَتِ إِنِّي قَدْ جَاءَنِي مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا لَمْ يَأْتِكَ فَاتَّبِعْنِي أَهْدِكَ صِرَاطاً
سَوِياًّ (٤٣) يَا أَبَتِ لاَ تَعْبُدِ الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ عَصِياًّ
(٤٤) يَــا أَبَتِ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَن يَمَسَّكَ عَذَابٌ مِّنَ الرَّحْمَنِ فَتَكُونَ

لِلشَّيْطَانِ وَلِياً ﴿٤٥﴾ قَالَ أَرَاغِبٌ أَنْتَ عَنْ آلِهَتِي يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ لَئِن لَّمْ تَنتَهِ لأَرْجُمَنَّكَ وَاهْجُرْنِي مَلِياً ﴿٤٦﴾ قَالَ سَلامٌ عَلَيْكَ سَأَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكَ رَبِّــي إِنَّهُ كَانَ بِي حَفِياً ﴿٤٧﴾ وَأَعْتَزِلُكُمْ وَمَا تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ وَأَدْعُو رَبِّي عَسَى أَلاَّ أَكُونَ بِدُعَاءِ رَبِّي شَقِياً ﴿٤٨﴾ ﴾ [مريم]

﴿*(Also) mention in the Book (the story of) Abraham: He was a man of truth, A prophet. Behold, he said to his father: 'O my father! Why worship that which heareth not and seeth not, and can profit thee nothing? O my father! To me hath come knowledge which hath not reached thee: so follow me: I will guide thee to a Way that is even and straight. O my father! Serve not Satan: for Satan is a rebel against (Allah) Most Gracious. O my father! I fear lest a penalty affect thee from (Allah) Most Gracious, so that thou become to Satan a friend.' (The father) replied: 'Dost thou hate my gods, O Abraham? If thou forbear not, I will indeed stone thee: Now get away from me for a good long while!' Abraham said: 'Peace be on thee: I will pray to my Lord for thy forgiveness: for He is to me Most Gracious. And I will turn away from you (all) and from those whom ye invoke besides Allah: I will call on my Lord: perhaps, by my prayer to my Lord, I shall be not unblest.'*﴾

(Maryam: 41-48)

In *Surat* Al-Anbiya', Ibrahim's argumentation with the authority is elaborated as follows,

﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ رُشْدَهُ مِن قَبْلُ وَكُنَّا بِه عَالِمِينَ (٥١) إِذْ قَالَ
لأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا هَذِهِ التَّمَاثِيلُ الَّتِي أَنتُمْ لَهَا عَاكِفُونَ (٥٢) قَالُوا
وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا لَهَا عَابِدِينَ (٥٣) قَالَ لَقَدْ كُنتُمْ أَنتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُمْ فِي
ضَلالٍ مُّبِينٍ (٥٤) قَالُوا أَجِئْتَنَا بِالْحَقِّ أَمْ أَنْتَ مِنَ اللاَّعِبِينَ (٥٥) قَالَ
بَل رَّبُّكُمْ رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ الَّذِي فَطَرَهُنَّ وَأَنَا عَلَى ذَلِكُم
مِّنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ (٥٦) وَتَاللَّهِ لأَكِيدَنَّ أَصْنَامَكُم بَعْدَ أَن تُوَلُّوا مُدْبِرِينَ
(٥٧) فَجَعَلَهُمْ جُذَاذاً إِلاَّ كَبِيراً لَّهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ يَرْجِعُونَ (٥٨) قَالُوا
مَن فَعَلَ هَذَا بِآلِهَتِنَا إِنَّهُ لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ (٥٩) قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا فَتًى
يَذْكُرُهُمْ يُقَالُ لَهُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ (٦٠) قَالُوا فَأْتُوا بِهِ عَلَى أَعْيُنِ النَّاسِ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْهَدُونَ (٦١) قَالُوا أَأَنْتَ فَعَلْتَ هَذَا بِآلِهَتِنَا يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ (٦٢)
قَالَ بَلْ فَعَلَهُ كَبِيرُهُمْ هَذَا فَاسْأَلُوهُمْ إِن كَانُوا يَنطِقُونَ (٦٣)
فَرَجَعُوا إِلَى أَنفُسِهِمْ فَقَالُوا إِنَّكُمْ أَنتُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ (٦٤) ثُمَّ نُكِسُوا
عَلَى رُءُوسِهِمْ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ مَا هَؤُلاءِ يَنطِقُونَ (٦٥) قَالَ أَفَتَعْبُدُونَ
مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لاَ يَنفَعُكُمْ شَيْئاً وَلايَضُرُّكُمْ (٦٦) أُفٍّ لَّكُمْ وَلِمَا
تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَفَلاَ تَعْقِلُونَ (٦٧) قَالُوا حَرِّقُوهُ وَانصُرُوا
آلِهَتَكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ (٦٨) قُلْنَا يَا نَارُ كُونِي بَرْداً وَسَلاماً عَلَى
إِبْرَاهِيمَ (٦٩) وَأَرَادُوا بِهِ كَيْداً فَجَعَلْنَاهُمُ الأَخْسَرِينَ (٧٠) وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ
وَلُوطاً إِلَى الأَرْضِ الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا لِلْعَالَمِينَ (٧١) وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ

إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ نَافِلَةً وَكُلاًّ جَعَلْنَا صَالِحِينَ (٧٢) وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ الْخَيْرَاتِ وَإِقَامَ الصَّلاةِ وَإِيتَاءَ الزَّكَاةِ وَكَانُوا لَنَا عَابِدِينَ (٧٣)﴾ [الأنبياء]

﴿*We bestowed aforetime on Abraham his rectitude of conduct, and well were We acquainted with him. Behold! He said to his father and his people, 'What are these images, to which ye are (so assiduously) devoted?' They said, 'We found our fathers worshipping them.' He said, 'Indeed ye have been in manifest error ye and your fathers.' They said, 'Have you brought us the truth, or are you one of those who jest?' He said, 'Nay, your Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, He Who created them (from nothing): and I am a witness to this (truth). And by Allah, I have a plan for your idols after ye go away and turn your backs.' So he broke them to pieces, (all) but the biggest of them, that they might turn (and address themselves) to it. They said, 'Who has done this to our gods? He must indeed be some man of impiety!' They said, 'We heard a youth talk of them: he is called Abraham.' They said, 'Then bring him before the eyes of the people, That they may bear witness.' They said, 'Art thou the one that did this with our gods, O Abraham?' He said: 'Nay, this was done by this their biggest one! Ask them, if they can*

speak intelligently!' So they turned to themselves and said, 'Surely ye are the ones in the wrong!' Then were they confounded with shame: (they said), 'Thou knowest full well that these (idols) do not speak!' (Abraham) said, 'Do ye then worship, besides Allah, things that can neither be of any good to you nor do you harm? Fie upon you, and upon the things that ye worship besides Allah! Have ye no sense?' They said, 'Burn him and protect your gods, if ye do (anything at all)!' We said, 'O fire! Be thou cool, and (a means of) safety for Abraham!' Then they sought a stratagem against him: but We made them the ones that lost most! But We delivered him and (his nephew) Lut (and directed them) to the land which We have blessed for the nations. And We bestowed on him Isaac and, as an additional gift, (a grandson) Jacob, and We made righteous men of every one (of them). And We made them leaders, guiding (men) by Our command, and We sent them inspiration to do good deeds, to establish regular Prayers, and to practise regular Charity; and they constantly served Us (and Us only).﴾

(Al-Anbiya': 51-73)

In *Surat* As-Safat, the heedlessness of Ibrahim's people is asserted as follows,

﴿وَإِنَّ مِــــن شِيعَتِهِ لَإِبْرَاهِيمَ (٨٣) إِذْ جَاءَ رَبَّهُ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ (٨٤) إِذْ
قَـــالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَاذَا تَعْبُدُونَ (٨٥) أَئِفْكاً آلِهَةً دُونَ اللَّهِ تُرِيدُونَ
(٨٦) فَمَا ظَنُّكُم بِرَبِّ العَالَمِينَ (٨٧) فَنَظَرَ نَظْرَةً فِي النُّجُومِ (٨٨)
فَقَـــالَ إِنِّي سَقِيمٌ (٨٩) فَتَوَلَّوْا عَنْهُ مُدْبِرِينَ (٩٠) فَرَاغَ إِلَى آلِهَتِهِمْ
فَقَالَ أَلاَ تَأْكُلُونَ (٩١) مَا لَكُمْ لاَ تَنطِقُونَ (٩٢) فَرَاغَ عَلَيْهِمْ ضَرْباً
بِالْيَمِينِ (٩٣) فَأَقْبَلُوا إِلَيْهِ يَزِفُّونَ (٩٤) قَالَ أَتَعْبُدُونَ مَا تَنْحِتُونَ (٩٥)
وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ وَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ (٩٦) قَالُوا ابْنُوا لَهُ بُنْيَاناً فَأَلْقُوهُ فِي الْجَحِيمِ
(٩٧) فَأَرَادُوا بِهِ كَيْداً فَجَعَلْنَاهُمُ الأَسْفَلِينَ (٩٨)﴾ [الصافات]

﴿*Verily among those who followed his way was Abraham. Behold, he approached his Lord with a sound heart. Behold, he said to his father and to his people, 'What is that which ye worship? Is it a Falsehood, gods other than Allah that ye desire? Then what is your idea about the Lord of the Worlds? Then did he cast a glance at the stars, and he said, 'I am indeed sick (at heart)'. So they turned away from him, and departed. Then did he turn to their gods and said, 'Will ye not eat (of the offerings before you)? What is the matter with you that ye speak not (intelligently)?' Then did he turn upon them, striking (them) with the right hand. Then came (the worshippers) with hurried steps, and faced (him). He said: 'Worship ye that which ye have (yourselves) carved? But Allah has created you and your handiwork.'*

They said, 'Build him a furnace, and throw him into the blazing fire.' (This failing), they then sought a stratagem against him, but We made them the ones most humiliated.﴾

(As-Saffat: 83-98)

Finally, in *Surat* Al-Baqarah, Ibrahim's argumentation with the ruler is mentioned as follows,

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِي حَاجَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي رَبِّهِ أَنْ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ إِذْ قَالَ
إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّيَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ قَالَ أَنَا أُحْيِي وَأُمِيتُ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْتِي بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ
الَّذِي كَفَرَ وَاللَّهُ لاَ يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ (٢٥٨)﴾ [البقرة]

﴿*Hast thou not turned thy vision to one who disputed with Abraham about his Lord, because Allah had granted him power? Abraham said: 'My Lord is He Who giveth life and death.' He said: 'I give life and death.' Said Abraham: 'But it is Allah that causeth the sun to rise from the east: do thou then cause it to rise from the west.' Thus was he confounded who (in arrogance) rejected Faith. Nor doth Allah give guidance to a people unjust.*﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 258)

Now, it becomes clear that the Glorious Qur'an does not repeat the argumentation of Ibrahim (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) more than one time. Rather, it states his different

argumentations – with his people, father, authority, and ruler – in the proper context. Ibrahim's argumentations are based on logic, reason, and practical experience.

Sometimes, the Glorious Qur'an states an argumentation or dialogue without naming the characters that involved in that dialogue or argumentation so that it may draw attention to an important principle or idea. Example of this is the debate that is mentioned in *Surat* Al-Kahf where the Glorious Qur'an says,

﴿وَاضْرِبْ لَهُم مَّثَلاً رَّجُلَيْنِ جَعَلْنَا لأَحَدِهِمَا جَنَّتَيْنِ مِنْ أَعْنَابٍ
وَحَفَفْنَاهُمَا بِنَخْلٍ وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمَا زَرْعاً (٣٢) كِلْتَا الْجَنَّتَيْنِ آتَتْ
أُكُلَهَا وَلَمْ تَظْلِم مِّنْهُ شَيْئاً وَفَجَّرْنَا خِلالَهُمَا نَهَراً (٣٣) وَكَانَ لَهُ ثَمَرٌ
فَقَالَ لِصَاحِبِهِ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُ أَنَا أَكْثَرُ مِنكَ مَالاً وَأَعَزُّ نَفَراً (٣٤)
وَدَخَلَ جَنَّتَهُ وَهُوَ ظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِ قَالَ مَا أَظُنُّ أَن تَبِيدَ هَذِهِ أَبَداً (٣٥)
وَمَا أَظُنُّ السَّاعَةَ قَائِمَةً وَلَئِن رُّدِدتُّ إِلَى رَبِّي لأَجِدَنَّ خَيْراً مِنْهَا
مُنقَلَباً (٣٦) قَالَ لَهُ صَاحِبُهُ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُ أَكَفَرْتَ بِالَّذِي خَلَقَكَ مِن
تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ سَوَّاكَ رَجُلاً (٣٧) لَكِنَّا هُوَ اللَّهُ رَبِّي وَلاَ
أُشْرِكُ بِرَبِّي أَحَداً (٣٨) وَلَوْلا إِذْ دَخَلْتَ جَنَّتَكَ قُلْتَ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ
لاَ قُوَّةَ إِلاَّ بِاللَّهِ إِن تَرَنِ أَنَا أَقَلَّ مِنكَ مَالاً وَوَلَداً (٣٩) فَعَسَى رَبِّي
أَن يُؤْتِيَنِي خَيْراً مِّن جَنَّتِكَ وَيُرْسِلَ عَلَيْهَا حُسْبَاناً مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فَتُصْبِحَ
صَعِيداً زَلَقاً (٤٠) أَوْ يُصْبِحَ مَاؤُهَا غَوْراً فَلَن تَسْتَطِيعَ لَهُ طَلَباً (٤١)

وَأُحِيطَ بِثَمَرِهِ فَأَصْبَحَ يُقَلِّبُ كَفَّيْهِ عَلَى مَا أَنفَقَ فِيهَا وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا وَيَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي لَمْ أُشْرِكْ بِرَبِّي أَحَداً (٤٢)﴾ [الكهف]

﴿*Set forth to them the parable of two men: for one of them We provided two gardens of grapevines and surrounded them with date palms; in between the two we placed corn fields. Each of those gardens brought forth its produce, and failed not in the least therein: in the midst of them We caused a river to flow. (Abundant) was the produce this man had: he said to his companion, in the course of a mutual argument: 'More wealth have I than you, and more honour and power in (my following of) men.' He went into his garden in a state (of mind) unjust to his soul: he said, 'I deem not that this will ever perish; nor do I deem that the Hour (of Judgment) will (ever) come: even if I am brought back to my Lord, I shall surely find (there) something better in exchange.' His companion said to him, in the course of the argument with him: 'Dost thou deny Him Who created thee out of dust, then out of a sperm-drop, then fashioned thee into a man? But (I think) for my part that He is Allah, my Lord, and none shall I associate with my Lord. Why didst thou not, as thou goeth into thy garden, say: Allah's Will (be done)! There is no power but with Allah! If thou dost see me less than thee in wealth and sons, it may be that my Lord will give me something better than thy*

garden, and that He will send on thy garden thunderbolts (by way of reckoning) from heaven, making it (but) slippery sand! Or the water of the garden will run off underground so that thou wilt never be able to find it.' So his fruits (and enjoyment) were encompassed (with ruin), and he remained twisting and turning his hands over what he had spent on his property, which had (now) tumbled to pieces to its very foundations, and he could only say, 'Woe is me! Would I have never ascribed partners to my Lord and Cherisher!'﴾

(Al-Kahf: 32-42)

Like his ancestor Ibrahim (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) debated with the disbelievers about the latter's deities. In this context, the Glorious Qur'an says,

﴿أَيُشْرِكُونَ مَا لاَ يَخْلُقُ شَيْئاً وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ (١٩١) وَلاَ يَسْتَطِيعُونَ
لَهُمْ نَصْراً وَلاَ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَنصُرُونَ (١٩٢) وَإِن تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَى لاَ
يَتَّبِعُوكُمْ سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْكُمْ أَدَعَوْتُمُوهُمْ أَمْ أَنتُمْ صَامِتُونَ (١٩٣) إِنَّ
الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ عِبَادٌ أَمْثَالُكُمْ فَادْعُوهُمْ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا
لَكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (١٩٤) أَلَهُمْ أَرْجُلٌ يَمْشُونَ بِهَا أَمْ لَهُمْ أَيْدٍ
يَبْطِشُونَ بِهَا أَمْ لَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا أَمْ لَهُمْ آذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا
قُلِ ادْعُوا شُرَكَاءَكُمْ ثُمَّ كِيدُونِ فَلاَ تُنظِرُونِ (١٩٥)﴾ [الأعراف]

﴿*Do they indeed ascribe to Him as partners things that can create nothing, but are themselves created? No aid can they give them nor can they aid themselves. If ye call them to guidance, they will not obey: for you it is the same whether ye call them or ye hold your peace. Verily those who mean ye who ye call upon besides Allah are servants like unto you: call upon them and let them listen to your prayer, if ye are (indeed) truthful. Have they feet to walk with? or hands to lay hold with? or eyes to see with? or ears to hear with? Say: 'Call your partners, scheme (your worst) against me, and give me no respite!'*﴾

(Al-A`raf: 191-195)

Likewise, he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) debated with the disbelievers about the Glorious Qur'an as the Qur'an states,

﴿أَمْ يَقُولُونَ شَاعِرٌ نَّتَرَبَّصُ بِهِ رَيْبَ الْمَنُونِ (٣٠) قُلْ تَرَبَّصُوا فَإِنِّي مَعَكُم
مِّنَ الْمُتَرَبِّصِينَ (٣١) أَمْ تَأْمُرُهُمْ أَحْلَامُهُم بِهَذَا أَمْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ طَاغُونَ
(٣٢) أَمْ يَقُولُونَ تَقَوَّلَهُ بَل لَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ (٣٣) فَلْيَأْتُوا بِحَدِيثٍ مِّثْلِهِ إِن
كَانُوا صَادِقِينَ (٣٤) أَمْ خُلِقُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ شَيْءٍ أَمْ هُمُ الْخَالِقُونَ (٣٥)
أَمْ خَلَقُوا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بَل لَّا يُوقِنُونَ (٣٦)﴾ [الطور]

﴿*Or do they say: 'A Poet! We await for him some calamity (hatched) by time!' Say thou: 'Await ye! I too will wait along with you!' Is it*

that their faculties of understanding urge them to this, or are they but a people transgressing beyond bounds? Or do they say, 'He fabricated the (Message)?' Nay, they have no Faith! Let them then produce a recital like unto it, if (it be) they speak the Truth! Were they created of nothing, or were they themselves the creators? Or did they create the heavens and the earth? Nay, they have no firm belief.﴾

(At-Tur: 30-36)

Moreover, he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) debated with his people about his prophethood. The Glorious Qur'an says,

﴿وَإِذَا تُتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَات قَالَ الَّذينَ لاَ يَرْجُونَ لقَاءَنَا ائْت
بقُرْآن غَيْرِ هَذَا أَوْ بَدِّلْهُ قُلْ مَا يَكُونُ لي أَنْ أُبَدِّلَهُ من تلْقَاءِ نَفْسي
إنْ أَتَّبِعُ إلاَّ مَا يُوحَى إلَيَّ إنِّي أَخَافُ إنْ عَصَيْتُ رَبِّي عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ
عَظِيمٍ (١٥) قُل لَّوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا تَلَوْتُهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلاَ أَدْرَاكُم به فَقَدْ
لَبثْتُ فيكُمْ عُمُراً مِّن قَبْله أَفَلاَ تَعْقلُونَ (١٦) فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ ممَّنِ افْتَرَى
عَلَى اللَّه كَذباً أَوْ كَذَّبَ بآيَاته إنَّهُ لاَ يُفْلحُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ (١٧) وَيَعْبُدُونَ
منْ دُونِ اللَّه مَا لاَ يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلاَ يَنفَعُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ هَؤُلاءِ شُفَعَاؤُنَا
عندَ اللَّه قُلْ أَتُنَبِّئُونَ اللَّهَ بمَا لاَ يَعْلَمُ في السَّمَوَاتِ وَلاَ في الأَرْضِ
سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ (١٨)﴾ [يونس]

﴿*But when our Clear Signs are rehearsed unto them, those who rest not their hope on their*

meeting with Us, say: 'Bring us reading other than this, or change this,' say: 'It is not for me, of my own accord, to change it: I follow naught but what is revealed unto me: if I were to disobey my Lord, I should myself fear the penalty of a great day (to come).' Say: 'If Allah had willed, I should not have rehearsed it to you, nor would He have made it known to you. A whole lifetime before this have I tarried amongst you: will ye not then understand?' Who doth more wrong than such as forge a lie against Allah, or deny His Signs? But never will prosper those who sin. They serve, besides Allah, things that hurt them not nor profit them, and they say: 'These are our intercessors with Allah.' Say: 'Do ye indeed inform Allah of something He knows not, in the heavens or on earth?' Glory be to Him and far is He above the partners they ascribe (to Him).﴾

(Yunus: 15-18)

He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) argued with the disbelievers about the victory of the Roman people – who followed a Divine Book - over their Persian enemy. In this context, the Glorious Qur'an states,

﴿الـــم (١) غُلِبَتِ الرُّومُ (٢) فِي أَدْنَى الأَرْضِ وَهُم مِّنْ بَعْدِ غَلَبِهِمْ سَيَغْلِبُونَ (٣)﴾ [الروم]

﴿*A.L.M. The Roman Empire has been defeated in a land close by; but they, (even) after (this) defeat of theirs, will soon be victorious.*﴾

(Ar-Rum: 1-3)

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) debated with the People of the Book – the Jews and Christians. He argued with the Jews about the cause of prohibition in their law, which was a penalty inflicted upon them. The Glorious Qur'an says,

﴿كُــلُّ الطَّعَــامِ كَانَ حِلاًّ لِّبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِلاَّ مَا حَرَّمَ إِسْرَائِيلُ عَلَى نَفْســـهِ مِن قَبْلِ أَن تُنَزَّلَ التَّوْرَاةُ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِالتَّوْرَاةِ فَاتْلُوهَا إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (٩٣) فَمَنِ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ الكَذِبَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ فَأُوْلَئِكَ هُــمُ الظَّالِمُونَ (٩٤) قُلْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ فَاتَّبِعُوا مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفاً وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ (٩٥)﴾ [آل عمران]

﴿*All food was lawful to the Children of Israel, except what Israel made unlawful for itself, before the law (of Moses) was revealed. Say: Bring ye the law and study it, if ye be men of truth. If any, after this, invent a lie and attribute it to Allah, they are indeed unjust wrongdoers. Say: 'Allah speaketh the Truth: follow the religion of Abraham, the sane in Faith; he was not of the pagans.'*﴾

(Al `Imran: 93-95)

He, likewise, debated with the Christians about Jesus (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). The Glorious Qur'an eloquently states,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّـــهَ اصْــطَفَى آدَمَ وَنُوحاً وَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى
العَـــالَمِينَ (٣٣) ذُرِّيَّةً بَعْضُهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ (٣٤) إِذْ
قَالَت امْرَأَةُ عِمْرَانَ رَبِّ إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّراً فَتَقَبَّلْ
مِــنِّي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ العَلِيمُ (٣٥) فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي
وَضَــعْتُهَا أُنثَى وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعَتْ وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالأُنثَى وَإِنِّي
سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ وَإِنِّي أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ (٣٦)
فَتَقَــبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتاً حَسَناً وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا كُلَّمَا
دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا المِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِندَهَا رِزْقاً قَالَ يَا مَرْيَمُ أَنَّى لَكِ
هَــذَا قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَن يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ
(٣٧) هُنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُ قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِن لَّدُنكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً
إِنَّــكَ سَــمِيعُ الدُّعَــاءِ (٣٨) فَنَادَتْهُ المَلائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي
المِحْــرَابِ أَنَّ اللَّـــهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَى مُصَدِّقاً بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَسَيِّداً
وَحَصُـــوراً وَنَبِياًّ مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ (٣٩) قَالَ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلامٌ
وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِيَ الكِبَرُ وَامْرَأَتِي عَاقِرٌ قَالَ كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ (٤٠)
قَـــالَ رَبِّ اجْعَل لِّي آيَةً قَالَ آيَتُكَ أَلاَّ تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ إِلاَّ
رَمْزاً وَاذْكُر رَّبَّكَ كَثِيراً وَسَبِّحْ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالإِبْكَارِ (٤١) وَإِذْ قَالَتِ
المَلائِكَـــةُ يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفَاكِ عَلَى نِسَاءِ
العَالَمِينَ (٤٢) يَا مَرْيَمُ اقْنُتِي لِرَبِّكِ وَاسْجُدِي وَارْكَعِي مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ

(٤٣) ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا كُنتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يُلْقُونَ أَقْلامَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ يَكْفُلُ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا كُنتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ (٤٤) إِذْ قَالَتِ المَلائِكَةُ يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنْهُ اسْمُهُ المَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَجِيهاً فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالآخِرَةِ وَمِنَ المُقَرَّبِينَ (٤٥) وَيُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي المَهْدِ وَكَهْلاً وَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ (٤٦) قَالَتْ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِي بَشَرٌ قَالَ كَذَلِكِ اللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ إِذَا قَضَى أَمْراً فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُن فَيَكُونُ (٤٧) وَيُعَلِّمُهُ الكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَاةَ وَالإِنجِيلَ (٤٨) وَرَسُولاً إِلَى بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنِّي قَدْ جِئْتُكُم بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ أَنِّي أَخْلُقُ لَكُم مِّنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْراً بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُبْرِئُ الأَكْمَهَ وَالأَبْرَصَ وَأُحْيِي المَوْتَى بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدَّخِرُونَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَةً لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ (٤٩) وَمُصَدِّقاً لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَاةِ وَلأُحِلَّ لَكُم بَعْضَ الَّذِي حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَجِئْتُكُم بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ (٥٠) إِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُّسْتَقِيمٌ (٥١) فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَى مِنْهُمُ الكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ قَالَ الحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنصَارُ اللَّهِ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَاشْهَدْ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ (٥٢) رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا بِمَا أَنزَلْتَ وَاتَّبَعْنَا الرَّسُولَ فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ (٥٣) وَمَكَرُوا وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ المَاكِرِينَ (٥٤) إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَى يَوْمِ القِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ

إِلَـــيَّ مَـــرْجِعُكُمْ فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ (٥٥) فَأَمَّا
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَأُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَاباً شَدِيداً فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالآخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن
نَّاصِـــرِينَ (٥٦) وَأَمَّـــا الَّذِيـــنَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ
أُجُورَهُـــمْ وَاللَّـــهُ لاَ يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ (٥٧) ذَلِكَ نَتْلُوهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ
الآيَـــاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الحَكِيمِ (٥٨) إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَى عِندَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ
خَلَقَهُ مِن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُن فَيَكُونُ (٥٩) الحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ فَلاَ تَكُن
مِّنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ (٦٠) فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ العِلْمِ فَقُلْ
تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ
ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَل لَّعْنَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الكَاذِبِينَ (٦١) إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ القَصَصُ
الحَـــقُّ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُوَ العَزِيزُ الحَكِيمُ (٦٢) فَإِن
تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُفْسِدِينَ (٦٣) قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى
كَلِمَـــةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلاَّ نَعْبُدَ إِلاَّ اللَّهَ وَلاَ نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئاً وَلاَ
يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضاً أَرْبَاباً مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا
مُسْلِمُونَ (٦٤) يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تُحَآجُّونَ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمَا أُنزِلَتِ
التَّوْرَاةُ وَالإِنجِيلُ إِلاَّ مِن بَعْدِهِ أَفَلاَ تَعْقِلُونَ (٦٥)﴾ [آل عمران]

﴿*Allah did choose Adam and Noah, the family of Abraham, and the family of `Imran above all people, offspring, one of the other: and Allah heareth and knoweth all things. Behold! Wife of `Imran said: 'O my Lord I do dedicate unto thee what is in my womb for thy special service: so accept this of me: for thou*

hearest and knowest all things.' When she delivered her, she said: O my Lord! Behold, I delivered a female child, and Allah knew best what she brought forth and nowise is the male like the female. I have named her Mary, and I commend her and her offspring to Thy protection from the evil one, the rejected. Right graciously did her Lord accept her: He made her grow in purity and beauty: to the care of Zakariya was she assigned. Every time that he entered (her) chamber to see her, he found her supplied with sustenance. He said: 'O Mary whence (comes) this to you?' She said: 'From Allah: for Allah provides sustenance to whom He pleases, without measure.' There did Zakariya pray to his Lord, grant unto me from Thee a progeny that is pure: for Thou art He that heareth prayer. While he was standing in prayer in the chamber, the angels called unto him: 'Allah doth give thee glad tidings of Yahya, witnessing the truth of a Word from Allah, and (be besides) noble, chaste, and a prophet, of the (goodly) company of the righteous.' He said: 'O my Lord! How shall I have a son, seeing I am very old, and my wife is barren?' Thus, was the answer, doth Allah accomplish what He willeth. He said: 'O my Lord give me a sign'. Thy sign, was the answer, shall be that thou shalt speak to no man for three days but with signals. Then celebrate

the praises of thy Lord again and again, and glorify Him in the evening and in the morning. Behold, the angels said: 'O Mary Allah hath chosen thee and purified thee, chosen thee above the women of all nations. O Mary worship thy Lord devoutly: prostrate thyself, and bow down (in prayer) with those who bow down.' This is part of the tidings of the things unseen, which We reveal unto thee (O Prophet) by inspiration: thou wast not with them when they cast lots with arrows, as to which of them should be charged with the care of Mary: nor wast thou with them when they disputed (the point). Behold! The angels said: 'O Mary! Allah giveth thee glad tidings of a Word from Him: his name will be Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, held in honour in this world and the Hereafter and of (the company of) those nearest to Allah; he shall speak to the people in childhood and in maturity. And he shall be (of the company) of the righteous.' She said: 'O my Lord! How shall I have a son when no man hath touched me?' He said: 'Even so: Allah createth what He willeth: when He hath decreed a plan, He but saith to it, 'Be', and it is! And Allah will teach him the book and wisdom, the law and the gospel, and (appoint him) a messenger to the Children of Israel, (with this message): I have come to you, with a sign from your Lord, in that I make for you out of clay, as it were, the

figure of a bird, and breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by Allah's leave: and I heal those born blind, and the lepers, and I quicken the dead, by Allah's leave; and I declare to you what ye eat, and what ye store in your houses. Surely therein is a Sign for you if ye did believe; (I have come to you) to attest the law which was before me. And to make lawful to you part of what was (before) forbidden to you; I have come to you with a Sign from your Lord. So fear Allah, and obey me. It is Allah who is my Lord and your Lord; then worship Him. This is a way that is straight. When Jesus found unbelief on their part he said: 'Who will be my helpers to (the work of) Allah?' Said the disciples: 'We are Allah's helpers: we believe in Allah, and do thou bear witness that we are Muslims. Our Lord! We believe in what Thou hast revealed, and we follow the Messenger; then write us down among those who bear witness.' And (the unbelievers) plotted and planned, and Allah too planned, and the best of planners is Allah. Behold! Allah said: O Jesus, I will take thee and raise thee to Myself and clear thee (of the falsehoods) of those who blaspheme; I will make those who follow thee superior to those who reject Faith, to the Day of Resurrection: then shall ye all return unto Me, and I will judge between you of the matters wherein ye dispute. As to those

who reject Faith, I will punish hem with terrible agony in this world nd in the Hereafter, nor will they have anyone to help. As to those who believe and work righteousness, Allah will pay them (in full) their reward; but Allah loveth not those who do wrong. This is what We rehearse unto thee of the signs and the message of wisdom. The similitude of Jesus before Allah is as that of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him: Be: and he was. The truth (comes) from Allah alone; so be not of those who doubt. If any one disputes in this matter with thee, now after (full) knowledge hath come to thee, say: Come let us gather together, our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves: then let us earnestly pray, and invoke the curse of Allah on those who lie! This is the true account: there is no god except Allah He is indeed the Exalted in power, the Wise. But if they turn back, Allah hath full knowledge of those who do mischief. Say: 'O People of the Book come to common terms as between us and you: that we worship none but Allah; that we associate no partners with Him; that we erect not, from among ourselves, lords and patrons other than Allah.' If then they turn back, say ye: 'Bear witness that we (at last) are Muslims (bowing to Allah's will)'. Ye, People of the Book, why dispute ye about

Abraham, when the law and the Gospel were not revealed till after him? Have you understanding?﴿

(Al `Imran: 33-65)

Wonderful Islamic ethics appeared in the argumentation of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) with the Christians of Najran, a Yemeni group. When the latter came to the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in Madinah, he permitted them to enter his mosque and greeted them. In the meanwhile, the time for their prayer became due and therefore they offered their prayer in the Prophet's mosque when the Companions of the Prophet (may Allah be pleased with them all) objected but the latter commanded them to let those Christians perform their prayer in the mosque. Afterwards, the Christian group argued with the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying, "Would you like us to worship you, Oh Muhammad!" Thereupon, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) responded, "Allah forbids me to worship other than Him or to call people to worship other than Him; Allah neither sends me with this mission nor commands me to do so."

In this connection, the following Qur'anic verse has been revealed,

﴿مَــا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَن يُؤْتِيَهُ اللَّهُ الكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ ثُمَّ يَقُولَ
لِلنَّاسِ كُونُوا عِبَاداً لِّي مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلَكِن كُونُوا رَبَّانِيِّينَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ
تُعَلِّمُونَ الكِتَابَ وَبِمَا كُنتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ (٧٩)﴾ [آل عمران]

﴿*It is not (possible) that a man, to whom is given the book, and wisdom, and the prophetic office, should say to people: be ye my worshippers rather than Allah's: on the contrary (he would say) be ye worshippers of Him Who is truly the Cherisher of all: for ye have taught the book and ye have studied it earnestly.*﴾

(Al `Imran: 79)

On his part, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) called them to:

- believe in the Oneness of Allah,
- come together and pray Allah to destroy the party which does not adopt the truth after being proved, and
- agree on worshiping none but Allah.

Although they rejected the Prophet's call, they were neither harmed nor enforced to adhere to the call of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Rather, they concluded a peace treaty with the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

Thus, Islam – through the aforementioned Qur'anic guidance – permits argument with its opponents. Books of Islamic history, literature,

philosophy, and theology mention so many instances of these arguments with non-Muslims.

Muslim scholars, therefore, wrote numerous books dealing with this particular branch of knowledge, which is known as "*The Ethics of Research and Debate in Islam*". Moreover, they have translated these ethics into practice in case of their arguments over subsidiary issues of *Shari`ah* (the Islamic Law).

Ibn Qudamah, the author of *Al-Mughni*, used to preach people and argue with his opponents in the mosque of Damascus. Ibn `Abbas, the Companion of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) once called a man who disagreed with him over a subsidiary issue of *Shari`ah* to argumentation and then to pray Allah, Most High, to destroy the wrong-doer.

Could people, then, find any similar system to the Qur'anic methodology of argument and debate? Are there any other men - except Muslims - who apply these norms? Yet, these are some glittering aspects of the Islamic civilization, which drives people from the depth of darkness to light and truth.

The Rules of Argumentation

On reflecting over the debates and arguments mentioned in the Glorious Qur'an, it is found to

set certain rules pertinent to debate and argument. Following are some of these rules:

1- The rejection of blind imitation: the Glorious Qur'an rejects blind imitation, warns people against it, and exposes its contradiction with reason and science. In this connection, the Glorious Qur'an states,

﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا أَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا أَوَ لَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ لاَ يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْئاً وَلاَ يَهْتَدُونَ (١٧٠) وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي يَنْعِقُ بِمَا لاَ يَسْمَعُ إِلاَّ دُعَاءً وَنِدَاءً صُمٌّ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ لاَ يَعْقِلُونَ (١٧١)﴾ [البقرة]

﴿*When it is said to them: 'Follow what Allah hath revealed:' They say: 'Nay! We shall follow the ways of our fathers:' What! Even though their fathers were void of wisdom and guidance? The parable of those who reject Faith is as if one were to shout like a goat-herd, to things that listen to nothing but call and cries: deaf, dumb, and blind, they are void of wisdom.*﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 170-171)

﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ وَإِلَى الرَّسُولِ قَالُوا حَسْبُنَا مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا أَوَ لَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ لاَ يَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئاً وَلاَ يَهْتَدُونَ (١٠٤)﴾ [المائدة]

﴾*When it is said to them: 'Come to what Allah hath revealed; come to the Messenger': they say: 'Enough for us are the ways we found our fathers following.' What! Even though their fathers were void of knowledge and guidance?*﴿ (Al-Ma'idah: 104)

2- The rejection of basing arguments on the intention of overcoming the opponents even by means of falsehood.

3- The necessity of truthfulness and fairness in seeking the truth. The Glorious Qur'an reproaches a class of people who reject the truth, saying,

﴿وَإِذَا تُتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالُوا مَا هَذَا إِلاَّ رَجُلٌ يُرِيدُ أَن يَصُدَّكُمْ عَمَّا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَقَالُوا مَا هَذَا إِلاَّ إِفْكٌ مُّفْتَرًى وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ إِنْ هَذَا إِلاَّ سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ (٤٣) وَمَا آتَيْنَاهُم مِّن كُتُبٍ يَدْرُسُونَهَا وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ قَبْلَكَ مِن نَّذِيرٍ (٤٤) وَكَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَمَا بَلَغُوا مِعْشَارَ مَا آتَيْنَاهُمْ فَكَذَّبُوا رُسُلِي فَكَيْفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ (٤٥) قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَعِظُكُم بِوَاحِدَةٍ أَن تَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ مَثْنَى وَفُرَادَى ثُمَّ تَتَفَكَّرُوا مَا بِصَاحِبِكُم مِّن جِنَّةٍ إِنْ هُوَ إِلاَّ نَذِيرٌ لَّكُم بَيْنَ يَدَيْ عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ (٤٦) قُلْ مَا سَأَلْتُكُم مِّنْ أَجْرٍ فَهُوَ لَكُمْ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلاَّ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ (٤٧) قُلْ إِنَّ رَبِّي يَقْذِفُ بِالْحَقِّ عَلاَّمُ الْغُيُوبِ (٤٨) قُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَمَا يُبْدِئُ الْبَاطِلُ وَمَا يُعِيدُ (٤٩)﴾ [سبأ]

﴾*When Our Clear Signs are rehearsed to them, they say, 'This is only a man who wishes to hinder you from the (worship) which your fathers practised.' And they say, 'This is only a falsehood invented'. And the unbelievers say of the Truth when it comes to them, 'This is nothing but evident magic.' But We had not given them Books which they could study, nor sent messengers to them before thee as Warners. And their predecessors rejected (The Truth); these have not received a tenth of what We had granted to those: yet when they rejected My messengers, how (terrible) was My rejection (of them)! Say: 'I do admonish you on one point: that ye do stand up before Allah - (it may be) in pairs, or (it may be) singly - and reflect (within yourselves): your companion is not possessed: he is no less than a Warner to you, in face of a terrible Penalty.' Say: 'No reward do I ask of you: it is (all) in your interest: my reward is only due from Allah: and He is Witness to all things.' Say: 'Verily my Lord doth cast the (mantle of) Truth (over His servants), He that has full knowledge of (all) that is hidden.' Say: 'The Truth has arrived, and Falsehood neither creates anything new, nor restores anything.'*﴿

(Saba': 43-49)

4- The possibility of right and wrong, i.e., in case of argument each party should believe that it is liable to err as it is liable to be right. Emphasizing this fact, the Glorious Qur'an says,

﴿قُلْ مَن يَرْزُقُكُم مِّنَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ قُلِ اللَّهُ وَإِنَّا أَوْ إِيَّاكُمْ لَعَلَى هُدًى أَوْ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ (٢٤)﴾ [سبأ]

﴿*Say: 'Who gives you sustenance from the heavens and the earth?' Say: 'It is Allah; and certain it is that either we or ye are on right guidance or in manifest error.'*﴾

(Saba': 24)

5- The acceptance of doubt: Doubt is not rejected. Rather, it is an important step towards scientific study and analysis. Doubt, in itself, is a sort of thinking. Therefore, it is no wonder that some scholars of *Usul Al-Fiqh* (Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence) regard doubt as a duty upon every sane adult Muslim to establish deep-rooted faith. In his well-known "*The Deliverance from Error*", Imam Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali focused on the role of doubt in his life that led him to truth. The Algerian philosopher, Malik Ibn Nabi, for example, was a similar example in modern times. He rejected blind imitation and made use of doubt until he attained unswerving

faith. He wrote down his experience in his "*Adh-Dhahirah Al-Qur'aniyah*". In the 20th century, likewise, some Muslims have had the same experience. Among them is the eminent scholar, Sheikh Mahmud Shakir, who recorded his experience in his introduction to the book of Malik Ibn Nabi. The Glorious Qur'an says,

﴿فَإِن كُنتَ فِي شَكٍّ مِّمَّا أَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ فَاسْئَلِ الَّذِينَ يَقْرَءُونَ الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِكَ لَقَدْ جَاءَكَ الْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ فَلاَ تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ (٩٤)﴾ [يونس]

﴿*If thou wert in doubt as to what We have revealed unto thee, then ask those who have been reading the book from before thee: the Truth hath indeed come to thee from thy Lord: so be in no wise of those in doubt.*﴾

(Yunus: 94)

6- The necessity of relying on evidence. No claim is ever be considered without an evident proof. In this context, the Glorious Qur'an says,

﴿وَمَن يَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ لاَ بُرْهَانَ لَهُ بِهِ فَإِنَّمَا حِسَابُهُ عِندَ رَبِّهِ إِنَّهُ لاَ يُفْلِحُ الْكَافِرُونَ (١١٧)﴾ [المؤمنون]

﴿*If anyone invokes, besides Allah, any other god, he has no authority therefore; and his*

reckoning will be only with his Lord! And verily the unbelievers will fail to win through!﴾

(Al-Mu'minun: 117)

﴿أَمَّن يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَمَن يَرْزُقُكُم مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالأَرْضِ أَإِلَهٌ مَّعَ اللَّهِ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (٦٤)﴾ [النمل]

﴿*Or, Who originates Creation, then repeats it, and who gives you sustenance from heaven and earth? (Can there be another) god besides Allah? Say, 'Bring forth your argument, if ye are telling the truth!'*﴾

(An-Naml: 64)

7- The necessity of knowing the subject-matter of the argumentation. The Glorious Qur'an, confirms this rule, proclaiming,

﴿يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تُحَاجُّونَ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمَا أُنزِلَتِ التَّوْرَاةُ وَالإِنْجِيلُ إِلاَّ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ أَفَلاَ تَعْقِلُونَ (٦٥) هَا أَنتُمْ هَؤُلاءِ حَاجَجْتُمْ فِيمَا لَكُم بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلِمَ تُحَاجُّونَ فِيمَا لَيْسَ لَكُم بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لاَ تَعْلَمُونَ (٦٦) مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ يَهُودِياًّ وَلاَ نَصْرَانِياًّ وَلَكِن كَانَ حَنِيفاً مُّسْلِماً وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ (٦٧)﴾ [آل عمران]

﴿*Ye People of the Book why dispute ye about Abraham, when the law and the Gospel were not revealed till after him? Have you understanding? Ah ye are those who fell to*

disputing (even) in matters of which ye had some knowledge but why dispute ye in matters of which ye have no knowledge? It is Allah who knows, and ye who know not. Abraham was not a Jew nor yet a Christian; but he was true in Faith, and bowed his will to Allah's, (which is Islam), and he joined not gods with Allah.﴾

(Al `Imran: 65-67)

The Ethics of Argumentation

1- Argument should focus on its subject-matter not the persons involved in the argument. Consequently, in case of wrong-doing, one should declare himself clear of the wrong-doing not the wrong-doer. This principle was laid down by Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) when he declared himself clear of the wrong-doing that Khalid Ibn Al-Walid committed during one battle. Thus, he declared himself clear of the wrong-doing of Khalid not Khalid himself.

2- Argumentation should stick firmly to morality and good manners. The Glorious Qur'an commands,

﴿ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُم بِالَّتِي هِـــيَ أَحْسَـــنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ (١٢٥)﴾ [النحل]

﴿*Invite (all) to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and Most Gracious: for thy Lord knoweth best, who have strayed from His path, and who receive guidance.*﴾

(An-Nahl: 125)

Due attention is paid to the People of the Book in this regard when the Glorious Qur'an instructs,

﴿وَلاَ تُجَادِلُوا أَهْلَ الكِتَابِ إِلاَّ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِلاَّ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ وَقُولُوا آمَنَّا بِالَّذِي أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَأُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَإِلَهُنَا وَإِلَهُكُمْ وَاحِدٌ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ (٤٦)﴾ [العنكبوت]

﴿*And dispute ye not with the People of the Book, except with means better (than mere disputation), unless it be with those of them who inflict wrong (and injury): but say, 'We believe in the Revelation which has come down to us and in that which came down to you; our God and your God is One; and it is to Him we bow (in Islam).'*﴾

(Al-`Ankabut: 46)

3- Argumentation should be concluded with peace not enmity or hostility. The Glorious Qur'an confirms this principle, saying,

﴿فَلِذَلِكَ فَادْعُ وَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ وَلاَ تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَقُلْ آمَنتُ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ مِن كِتَابٍ وَأُمِرْتُ لأَعْدِلَ بَيْنَكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ لاَ حُجَّةَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ اللَّهُ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَنَا وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ (١٥)﴾ [الشورى]

﴿*Now then, for that (reason), call (them to the Faith), and stand steadfast as thou art commanded, nor follow thou their vain desires; but say: 'I believe in the Book which Allah has sent down; and I am commanded to judge justly between you. Allah is our Lord and your Lord: For us (is the responsibility for) our deeds, and for you for your deeds. There is no contention between us and you. Allah will bring us together, and to Him is (our) final goal.'*﴾

(Ash-Shura: 15)

The Philosophy of Argumentation in Islam

In the realm of religion and belief, the Islamic philosophy of argument is based on the fact that truth is one and its opposite is wrong. The Glorious Qur'an says,

﴿فَذَلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمُ الْحَقُّ فَمَاذَا بَعْدَ الْحَقِّ إِلاَّ الضَّلاَلُ فَأَنَّى تُصْرَفُونَ (٣٢)﴾ [يونس]

﴿*Such is Allah, your real Cherisher and Sustainer: apart from truth, what (remains) but error? How then are ye turned away?*﴾

(Yunus: 32)

Fruits of This Methodology

The Islamic methodology of argumentation has diverse fruits. Below are some of these fruits:

1- enhancement of morals,

2- advancement of science and knowledge,

3- confirmation of freedom of opinion and belief,

4- realization of the fact that differences among people are a continuous phenomenon for it is one of Allah's *Sunan* (decrees).

CHAPTER TWO

Distortions about Islam:

The Questions and Claims of the Christian Missionaries and Refuting Them

The First Question

Q. Why do you kill the apostate whereas your Qur'an assumes that ﴿*Let there be no compulsion in religion*﴾ (Al-Baqarah: 256), and ﴿*If it had been thy Lord's will, they would all have believed, all who are on earth wilt thou then compel mankind, against their will, to believe*﴾ (Yunus: 99)?

Why does contradiction take place between the religious texts and the application of the Islamic Law? Is it reasonable to force people not to change their minds while Muslim scholars change their opinions in many legal verdicts; even your Messenger changed his opinion more than once, e.g., he changed his opinion regarding the question of women visiting the graves and that of temporary marriage?

Likewise, abrogation has taken place in the Qur'an: ﴿*None of Our revelations do We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, but We substitute something better or similar.*﴾ (Al-Baqarah: 106)

Then, how do you ask people not to change their mind? Where is the freedom of opinion? Where is the freedom of religion?

A. There is no doubt that each nation has the right to enact laws that guarantee the protection of its identity. By the same token, the Muslim nation should protect its identity, mission and society against any external or internal danger by the proper means and penalties. No one can deny this right except an ignorant or oppressor.

In Islam, the penalty of apostasy is meant to achieve the above-mentioned aim, namely preserving the identity of the Muslim nation.

Departing Islam and belief to disbelief is like a disease that afflicts the mind, overwhelms the heart, and consequently brings one's life to an end.

Then, let us wonder from what does the apostate depart! Does he forsake Islam, the religion of universality, tolerance, human brotherhood, justice, kindness even to non-Muslims, freedom etc.? The apostate, however, departs Islam because of either misconception or whims. The former cause can be treated by means of knowledge while the latter should be dealt with by severe punishment.

Islam is a religion and knowledge: religion comes through divine revelation while knowledge should be in tune with reality and based on clear evidence.

Accordingly, the apostate who departs Islam has no plain evidence. Rather, he adheres to ignorance, doubt, blind imitation, and suspicion.

Moreover, freedom of opinion does not permit apostasy. For apostasy is based on whims and lusts rather than 'opinion' or 'reason'.

It is noteworthy that it is the role of the state to refute and remove any doubt if the apostate is truthful in seeking the truth. Nevertheless, it will be appropriate to quote the following dialogue between Al-Ma'mun and an apostate:

Al-Ma'mun: To me, it is more beloved to save your life rather than to behead you, and to prove your acquittal rather than to assure your guilt. So, why do you forsake Islam? Tell us in order to treat your disease? If our treatment befits you, make use of it, but if you find it of no avail, you will be blameless.

The apostate: Your differences among yourselves caused me to forsake Islam.

Al-Ma'mun: Differences among ourselves are of two categories. First, our differences over subsidiary *(far`i)* issues of *Shari`ah* which are regarded as mercy and ease for people. Second, our differences in interpreting the revelation while we are in agreement regarding its origin. In this context, it is noteworthy that if Allah has willed, He would

have made His revelation in no need of interpretation. Yet, religion is always in need of efforts and searching, which require hard working and racing.

Realizing the truth, the apostate proclaimed, "I witness that there is no god but Allah Who has no equal or son, that Jesus is His servant, that Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is truthful, and that you are the true commander of the believers."

Al-Ma'mun ordered his addressees, saying, "Save his honor and do not be kind towards him this day lest his enemies might say: 'He embraced Islam to gain the Muslims' favor. Later, don't neglect supporting, aiding, and consoling him."

If we reflect on the above-mentioned dialogue, we will see the peak of freedom, democracy, and tolerance. According to Ibrahim An-Nakh`i, the apostate is not to be killed but rather to be commanded to repent. According to a narration of `Umar Ibn Al-Khattab, the apostate should be commanded to repent and be imprisoned.

Accordingly, we can conclude that the issue of the penalty prescribed for apostasy is dependent on the public interest of the nation. Therefore, there is no harm in ignoring the apostasy of an individual as long as his crime does not harm the nation, while, a group of apostates should be fought for they would inevitably harm the nation.

Yet, as to their saying: "*Is it reasonable to force people not to change their minds while Muslim scholars change their opinions in many legal verdicts; even your Messenger changed his opinion more than once, e.g., he changed his opinion regarding the question of women visiting the graves and temporary marriage? Likewise, abrogation has taken place in the Qur'an: ﴾None of Our revelations do We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, but We substitute something better or similar.﴿ (Al-Baqarah: 106)*", it is based on their ignorance of the following:

1- the methodology of sound education, and
2- the Islamic wisdom in legislation.

The Glorious Qur'an adopts the methodology of graduation in changing people's traditions and prescribing acts of worship. Accordingly, the Glorious Qur'an has kept silent concerning some prescriptions for a period of time until faith became deep-rooted in the hearts of the believers, and then it proclaimed it in the appropriate time and circumstances. Examples of this are the prescription of Prayer in the Night of Isra' and Mi`raj (Night Journey) and *Zakah* (poor-due) and Fasting which have been all prescribed after the *Hijrah* (Migration to Madina).

Commenting on the prophetic *Hadith* that reads: "*Whoever says that there is no god but Allah, will enter Paradise*", At-Tirmidhi stated

that Imam Az-Zuhari was asked about the meaning of this *Hadith* for it signifies that the testification of faith is sufficient for entering Paradise with no need for good work. Yet Az-Zuhari disclosed the fact that this *Hadith* was said at the beginning of Islam when there were no duties or prohibitions.

Likewise, Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbade visiting the graves until faith became deep-rooted in the hearts of the believers and then he declared it permissible. The same thing applies also to the issue of temporary (*Mut'ah*) marriage, drinking alcohol, reading the preceding books such as the Torah and the gospels, etc.

As to the question of abrogation in the Qur'an, I see that abrogation has no place in the Qur'an for Allah, Most High, says,

﴿الـر تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْحَكِيمِ (١)﴾ [يونس]

﴿*A.L.R. These are the Ayats of the book of wisdom.*﴾ (Yunus: 1)

﴿الـر كِتَابٌ أُحْكِمَتْ آيَاتُهُ ثُمَّ فُصِّلَتْ مِن لَّدُنْ حَكِيمٍ خَبِيرٍ (١)﴾ [هود]

﴿*A.L.R. (This is) a book, with verses basic or fundamental (of established meaning), further*

explained in detail, from One Who is wise and well acquainted (with all things).﴾ (Hud: 1)

Moreover, Allah, Most High, commands the believers to refer the Glorious Qur'an to settle their disputes, saying,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُوْلِي الأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلاً (٥٩)﴾ [النساء]

﴾*O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those charged with authority among you. If ye differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if ye do believe in Allah and the Last Day: that is best, and most suitable for final determination.*﴿

(An-Nisa': 59)

Therefore, if abrogation has taken place in the Glorious Qur'an, Allah, Most High, would have exempted the abrogated verses from the above general rule.

In the Farewell Pilgrimage, furthermore, Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said "I have left amongst you two things if you firmly uphold to, you will never go astray after me: the Book of Allah and my *Sunnah*." If the Glorious Qur'an has had

abrogated verses, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) would have exempted them from the *Hadith*.

As to the Qur'anic verse that reads, ﴿*None of Our revelations do We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, but We substitute something better or similar*﴾ (Al-Baqarah: 106), it refers to miracles of the preceding prophets.

Nevertheless, if we admit the occurrence of abrogation in the Glorious Qur'an, it will refer to what took place during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) when the revelation was still ascending to change a law such as the case of changing the *Qiblah* (direction of prayer) from Jerusalem in Palestine to the Ka`bah in Makkah. Thus, the meaning of the above-mentioned Qur'anic verse is that the verses of the Glorious Qur'an abrogate the earlier rules.

As to the issue of different views held by Muslim scholars, these do not concern the fundamentals of religion; rather they concern the subsidiary rules of *Shari`ah* and are regarded as mercy and ease for man. Moreover, the different views held by Muslim scholars in the *far`i* issues of *Shari`ah* are due to scientific reasons such as regarding the means of transmission and the objectives of texts.

In spite of their differences over the *far`i* issues, no one of them has ever confined the truth to his stance only. Every one of them declared that if his opinion contradicts a sound proof of *Shari`ah*, his opinion will be null and void.

In Islam, the views held by scholars and their *Ijtihad* (personal reasoning) are not regarded as revelation. Islam, however, permits Muslim scholars to perform *Ijtihad* to meet the needs of the change in time and circumstances.

Ponder over the Gospels

Let me then ask you: Do you have a single copy of the Gospel? Or, do you have diverse gospels that have been translated from unknown sources. The church has canonized the four Gospels not basing its judgment on scientific reasons, rather by random choice. The rejected Gospels are 75, among the 11 epistles that belong to Peter.

Tell us then, what are the scientific reasons behind rejecting these Gospels and accepting only four?

The fact is that no one knows the truth regarding that choice. No one knows the false from the true, or the abrogating from the abrogated.

The Second Question

Q. Why do you prohibit non-Muslims from entering Makkah and Madinah? In contrast, Muslims are free to travel to Europe, to America, or to any other place where the majority of populations are Christians. Where is equality then? Doesn't this mean that you are intolerant; or, you have no trust on your religion?

Why do not you permit the Christian missionaries to enter Makkah or Madinah? Do you fear that Muslims may convert to Christianity? Where is your trust on your religion?

A. Here, I wonder why do you include Madinah in your inquiry? This is due to the ignorance of the questioner who does not know that this prohibition is restricted to Makkah and its Holy Sites only. Rather, the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah is not liable to this prohibition. In this context, Imam Ash-Shafi`i said, "There is no harm in permitting an unbeliever to spend the night in any mosque with the exception of the Holly Mosque in Makkah." Then, isn't this a great degree of tolerance?

It is well-known that rooms of the wives of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) were adjacent to the latter's mosque. Yet, the Jewish men used to visit the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in his house and the Jewish women, on the other hand, used to visit the Prophet's wives in the latter's house. Once, Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) entered the Prophet's house where he saw a Jewish woman making *Ruqyah* (protective words) for `A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her). Thereupon, Abu Bakr said to the Jewish woman, "Exorcise her by the Book of Allah."

Apparently, the above-mentioned story comprises two significant points:

a) permitting the People of the Book to enter the house of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and

b) permitting the Jewish woman to perform *Ruqyah* for `A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) as long as it was done by the Book of Allah, Most High.

Likewise, Ar-Rabi` Ibn Sulayman asked Imam Ash-Shafi`i, "Are the People of the Book permitted to perform *Ruqyah* for Muslims?" Ash-Shafi`i unequivocally replied, "Yes, they are allowed to do so provided that this should be done by Allah's Book or *Dhikr* (remembrance of Allah)".

Islam, thus, permitted the People of the Book to enter the very place where Revelation descended, namely the house of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

Moreover, when the Christians of Najran came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), the latter hosted them in his mosque. Yet, when time became due for their prayer, the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) were about to prevent them from performing their prayer in the Prophet's mosque. Yet, the Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) allowed these Christian people to perform their prayer in his mosque.

Then, is thistolerance or fanaticism! And, where is the fear that you – non-Muslims - depict Muslims with! Not only did the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) allow the Christian delegation to enter Madinah or rather his mosque, but he also permitted them to perform their prayer in his mosque.

Muslims, furthermore, are permitted to perform *Salah* (Prayer) in churches. Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari, a well-known Companion of the Prophet, performed *Salah* in a church and the same was done also by `Umar Ibn `Abd Al-`Aziz, the fifth caliph of the rightly-guided caliphs.

Don't you, O Christians, see this as an indication of freedom of religion and belief

advocated by Islam? Islam, thus, respect others' beliefs though it does not adopt them. Rather, it regards the others' beliefs as atheism.

Then, what is the question of Makkah?

Once I was in Italy where I met five monks. One of them challenged me, saying, "We have permitted you – Muslims – to build a mosque in Rome; then do you permit us to build a church in Makkah or Madinah?"

Eloquently, I replied, "Here, you should consider the following three points:

a) Islam is a religion, state, and politics and its constitution is the Glorious Qur'an; does the same apply to the Gospel?

b) Makkah is the sanctuary of Islam, and both of Makkah and Madinah were the places of descending the Revelation, the residence of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and fields of the Islamic history. Then, have you – Christians – permitted building the mosque in the sanctuary of the Vatican?

c) Muslims build mosques according to the instructions of the Glorious Qur'an. Do you find any instruction in the Gospel ordering building churches?

However, his answers were in the negative. Consequently, it has been proved with no doubt

that the analogy between Makkah and Rome is invalid. Also, the claim that mosques are built in the Christian lands while Muslims do not permit Christians to do so is null and void for churches are freely built in many of the Muslim lands.

Yet, when Islam prohibits non-Muslims from entering the sanctuary of Makkah, it is not an invented tradition since Joshua, according to the Bible, burnt the city of Jericho (Arihah) and prohibited entering it.

The Old Testament, likewise, spoke about the cities of the refugees where the murderers could resort to in order to escape from people.

Then, what is odd about declaring a sanctuary for Islam!

As to your allegation that Muslims prohibit Christians from entering Makkah owing to their fear that the Christian missionaries could persuade Muslims to convert to Christianity, it is a groundless allegation since you are permitted to enter all the Muslim lands with exception to Makkah, the sanctuary of Islam. You, moreover, are allowed to enter Madinah, the place of the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) mosque.

Furthermore, Imam Ash-Shafi`i is of the viewpoint that non-Muslims are not allowed to enter the Sacred Mosque only and not the whole

land of Makkah according to the Qur'anic verse that reads,

﴿يَـا أَيُّهَـا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْمُشْرِكُونَ نَجَسٌ فَلاَ يَقْرَبُوا الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ بَعْدَ عَامِهِمْ هَذَا... (٢٨)﴾ [التوبة]

﴾*O ye who believe! Truly the Pagans are unclean; so let them not, after this year of theirs, approach the sacred mosque...*﴿

(At-Tawbah: 28)

According to our history, the Archangel Gabriel [Jibril] (peace be upon him) has taught Prophet Ibrahim (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) the boundaries of the *Haram* (the Sanctuary of Islam in Makkah). Therefore, Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) commanded his Companions on the Day of `Arafat during the Farewell Pilgrimage, saying, "Stick to your rites for you are on a heritage of Ibrahim."

Islam, accordingly, inherited the *Haram* (the Sacred Mosque) from Ibrahim (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and you believe in Ibrahim; do you then blame him for doing so!

Here, it is noteworthy that Muslims themselves have no absolute freedom in the Sacred Mosque. They, for example, are forbidden to hunt animals or to cut trees in the *Haram*. The

Muslims' ruler, rather, is not allowed to carry out penalties or retaliation in the land of the *Haram*. This is in accordance to the Qur'anic verse that announces,

﴿... وَمَن دَخَلَهُ كَانَ آمِناً... (٩٧)﴾ [آل عمران]

﴿*... whoever enters it attains security.*﴾

(Al `Imran: 97)

On the one hand, Prayer in the Sacred Mosque is more virtuous than Prayer in any other mosque as the following *Hadith* indicates,

"*A single Prayer in my mosque is better than one hundred Prayers in other mosques with the exception of the Sacred Mosque in which a single Prayer is better than one thousand Prayers in other mosques.*"

On the other hand, committing sins in the Sacred Mosque is more grievous than it is in other places.

Allah, Most High, has called the Ka`bah *Al-Bait Al-Haram* and attributed it to Himself when saying,

﴿جَعَلَ اللَّهُ الْكَعْبَةَ الْبَيْتَ الْحَرَامَ قِيَاماً لِّلنَّاسِ ...﴾ [المائدة: ٩٧]

﴿*Allah made the Ka`bah, the sacred house, an asylum of security of men...*﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 97)

﴿... وَعَهِدْنَـا إِلَـى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَن طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْعَاكِفِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ (١٢٥)﴾ [البقرة]

﴿*... We covenanted with Abraham and Isma`il, that the should sanctify My House for those who compass it round, or use it as a retreat, or bow, or prostrate themselves (therein).*﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 125)

There is no wonder then in making a sanctuary for the Ka`bah for it has been a well-known tradition throughout the history of all nations. The Ka`bah is the House of Allah, Most High, and He has the undeniable right to protect it against the disbelievers who associate other deities with Him. Nevertheless, when a disbeliever converts to Islam, he will be welcomed in the House of Allah and its sanctuary.

I have seen the guards of the Vatican prevent some Christian women who display their attraction and charm from getting in.

Thus, I would like to stress the fact that when Islam prohibits non-Muslims from entering its sanctuary, it brings no innovation since it is a well-known tradition in all religions and nations throughout history as we have previously pointed out. Islam, in fact, does not only forbid some individuals to enter its sanctuary but also prevents the intermingling of two or more contradictory systems and beliefs.

Countries, nowadays, have an absolute freedom to restrict or even prevent the entrance of foreigners into their lands and no other country is granted the right to object to or intervene in other countries' policies.

Countries, furthermore, have an absolute right to expel all the foreigners residing in their lands for mere suspicion or fear of their disloyalty. Permanent residence in foreign countries is always subject to particular restrictions and conditions. In Islam, this question is totally different. Non-Muslims residing in the Muslim State are ruled by the fair Islamic maxim that admits: "They are entitled to have equal rights as Muslims have and to shoulder the same duties as Muslims do."

Muslims are required to believe in all previous Prophets (peace and blessings of Allah be upon them) without discrimination between one and another of them. The Glorious Qur'an eloquently commands,

﴿قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ
وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَى وَعِيسَى وَمَا أُوتِيَ
النَّبِيُّونَ مِن رَّبِّهِمْ لاَ نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ
(١٣٦)﴾ [البقرة]

﴿*Say ye: 'We believe in Allah, and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Isma`il, Isaac,*

Jacob, and the Tribes, and that given to Moses and Jesus, and that given to (all) Prophets from their Lord: we make no difference between one and another of them: and we bow to Allah (in Islam).'﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 136)

In a public speech delivered by the mayor of New York, he disclosed the fact that Muslims have the privilege of believing in all the previous Prophets while the Jews do not believe in Jesus and Muhammad and the Christians do not believe in Muhammad. Then, there is no wonder when Muslims prevent both the Jews and Christians from the sanctuary of Islam until they believe in Muhammad.

In conclusion, I would like to draw the attention to the Islamic concept of freedom, for freedom in Islam is a right and duty at the same time. It is the right that every individual enjoys as long as he does not harm the society. Unlike Muslims, Westerners are confused in determining the specific meaning of freedom; some of them give priority to the individuals' interest over that of the society while others adopt the contradictory attitude.

Let me further draw your attention to the peak of freedom in the opinion of Abu Hanifah, the eminent Muslim jurist and the founder of the Hanfi school of thought, who holds the opinion

that non-Muslims may enter the Sacred Mosque in case of necessity and when there is no necessity as well.

Although Muslim jurists differ with Abu Hanifah regarding this issue, I want to show you to what extent Islam advocates freedom of opinion. However, I think that Abu Hanifah held the above opinion for he might interpret the Qur'anic verse that reads: ﴾*O ye who believe truly the Pagans are unclean; so let them not, after this year of theirs, approach the Sacred Mosque.*﴿ (At-Tawbah: 28), as referring to preventing non-Muslims from performing *Hajj* (pilgrimage).

Then, where is the fear of your missionary activities! Where do you see intolerance or inequality in Islam!

The Third Question

Q. Why penalties in Islam are unreasonable? Penalties prescribed in the Qur'an does not match with the crimes committed.

There are contradictions in the Qur'an and the Hadiths (sayings) of your messenger. You, Muslims, claim that your Lord is Most Merciful and Most Compassionate and your messenger say that your Lord is more merciful to His servant than the mother to her baby; then is it reasonable that a mother throws her baby permanently in fire whatever his fault is!

How could you ask people to believe in a god who throws his servants in fire forever! How does a crime deserve permanent dwelling in fire!

Where is your alleged mercy and equity?

A. Your question is based on "reason", and we, Muslims, are in agreement with you that the religious rules should not be in conflict with "reason". We, at the same time, assert that Islam bases its beliefs and systems on the conformity with "reason". The Glorious Qur'an in numerous verses calls to reasoning and contemplation on

the creation made by Allah, on earth and in heaven. Thus, the Glorious Qur'an is also based on "reason" and knowledge.

Let me ask you then: What is the position of "reason" in your book?

Is it "reasonable" to believe that three beings constitute a single being (the dogma of Trinity)!

Is it "reasonable" to say that *god* eats, drinks, and goes to the rest room!

Is it "reasonable" to say that *god* felt regret because of his actions and that he could not be able to redeem the people from sin except through coming to this world via a woman's womb!

Is it "reasonable" to say, according to *Revelation* 1:5-6, that:

"*... and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father.*"

Is it "reasonable" to say, according to *Revelation* 1:18, that *god* said:

"*I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive forever and ever.*"

Is it "reasonable" to say that all children of Adam inherit sin from their father, Adam, and

no one would be freed from this sin except through baptizing!

In Europe, a hundred years ago, people used to throw the child who dies without being baptized in the garbage on the pretext that he would permanently dwell in fire!

Oh, I wonder what is the sin committed by that innocent child! Rather, does his sin match with the penalty inflicted upon him?

Furthermore, you ask about the mercy and equity of our Lord, Most High, and how a crime be a reason for permanent dwelling in fire.

Let me then draw your attention to what is recorded in your book, the Bible, that your *god* killed the inhabitants of the villages which Joshua occupied and burnt its cattle. Is this your ideal mercy even towards animals?

Is it a mercy to burn a thief along with his sons and daughters!

Nevertheless, Muslims read everyday at least seventeen times *Surat* Al-Fatihah, in which they earnestly call upon Allah, Most Merciful and Most Gracious, to guide them to the Straight Path that signifies all forms of good and which has been trodden by all righteous people. The glorious *Surah* reads as follows:

﴿بِسْــمِ اللَّــهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ (١) الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (٢) الرَّحْمــَنِ الرَّحِيمِ (٣) مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ (٤) إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ (٥) اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ (٦) صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلاَ الضَّالِّينَ (٧)﴾ [الفاتحة]

﴿In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Praise be to Allah, The Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds; Most Gracious, Most Merciful; Master of the Day of Judgment. Thee do we worship, and Thine aid we seek. Show us the Straight Way, the way of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace, those whose (portion) is not wrath, and who go not astray.﴾

(Al-Fatihah: 1-7)

What does your prayer consist of? It is as in *Matthew* 6: 9-13:

"This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'"

Is your prayer intended to gain "daily bread"! Is your *god*'s forgiveness of your debts dependant upon your forgiveness of your debtors! Can't repentance, good work, and *god*'s mercy be enough for forgiving your debts! Rather, why do you ask

god's for forgiveness while you claim that a mere belief in the Christ frees one from sins! Where is your "reason"! You, moreover, claim that one cannot be freed from sin without the intercession of the priest who frees people from sins; then where is your "reason"! And, who is more merciful: the one who forgives sins through repentance without human intercession or the one who needs human intercession to forgive sins!

As to your denial of the crime which causes its doer to dwell in fire forever, I ask you to reflect on the following:

This world, from its very beginning until its end, is based on a sole fact, namely belief in Allah, the Creator, adherence to His commandments, and unswerving belief in His recompense for the righteous people and punishment for the wicked ones.

The Day of Judgment and discrimination between the recompense of the righteous persons and the punishment of the wicked people are proved necessary by means of "reason" as well as religious texts.

In everyday life, we see good and wicked people, oppressed and oppressors, etc. With the passage of time, both the wrong-doer and the wronged pass away. In this present world, the wrong-doer enjoys the fruits of his oppression the

matter which causes the wronged a lot of pain. Therefore, punishing the wrong-doer and recompensing the wronged will become logically necessary in the world to come.

Besides, a lot of religious texts confirm the above idea. In the Glorious Qur'an, we read,

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاءَ وَالأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَاطِلاً ذَلِكَ ظَنُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنَ النَّارِ (٢٧) أَمْ نَجْعَلُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ كَالْمُفْسِدِينَ فِي الأَرْضِ أَمْ نَجْعَلُ الْمُتَّقِينَ كَالْفُجَّارِ (٢٨)﴾ [ص]

﴿*Not without purpose did We create heaven and earth and all between. That was the thought of Unbelievers but woe to the Unbelievers because of the Fire (of Hell). Shall We treat those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, the same as those who do mischief on earth? Shall We treat those who guard against evil, the same as those who turn aside from the right?*﴾

(Sad: 27-28)

﴿إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ (٣٤) أَفَنَجْعَلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ كَالْمُجْرِمِينَ (٣٥) مَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ (٣٦)﴾ [القلم]

﴿*Verily, for the Righteous, are Gardens of Delight, in the Presence of their Lord. Shall*

We then treat the People of Faith like the People of Sin? What is the matter with you? How judge ye?﴾

(Al-Qalam: 34-36)

Logically, as the righteous believer – who believes in Allah and the everlasting Last Day - will dwell in Paradise forever, the wicked disbeliever – who disbelieves in Allah and denies the recompense in the Day of Judgment – will dwell in fire forever. In this connection, Allah, Most High, says, in the Glorious Qur'an,

﴿هَـــذِهِ النَّارُ الَتِي كُنتُم بِهَا تُكَذِّبُونَ (١٤) أَفَسِحْرٌ هَذَا أَمْ أَنتُمْ لاَ تُبْصِـــرُونَ (١٥) اصْلَوْهَا فَاصْبِرُوا أَوْ لاَ تَصْبِرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنَّمَا تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (١٦)﴾ [الطور]

﴿*This, it will be said, 'Is the Fire, which ye were wont to deny! Is this then a fake, or is it ye that do not see? Burn ye therein: The same is it to you whether ye bear it with patience, or not; ye but receive the recompense of your (own) deeds.*﴾

(At-Tur: 14-16)

On the other hand, your Holy Book, the Bible, speaks in more than one location about hell and the permanent dwelling in it. Bellow are some examples:

"If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown in hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell." (*Matthew* 5: 29-30)

"And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. [Where... 'Their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.] And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, where 'their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched."

(*Mark* 9: 45-48)

"You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?"

(*Matthew* 23: 33)

"And the death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

(*Revelation* 20: 13-15)

"And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever." (*Revelation* 20: 10)

"And I hold the keys of death and Hades."
(*Revelation* 1: 18)

"And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home – these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day. In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal life."
(*Jude*: 6-7)

"For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment..."
(Peter 2: 4)

These are the texts in your book, the Bible, admitting Fire and the eternal dwelling therein by the sinners; even the angels themselves, are deemed, according to your book, to dwell permanently in hell if they commit sins.

Now, I would like to analyze the question of permanent stay in Hell or Paradise according to

the Glorious Qur'an. Allah, Most High, says in the Qur'an,

﴿يَوْمَ يَأْتِ لاَ تَكَلَّمُ نَفْسٌ إِلاَّ بِإِذْنِه فَمِنْهُمْ شَقِيٌّ وَسَعِيدٌ (١٠٥) فَأَمَّا
الَّذِيــنَ شَقُوا فَفِي النَّارِ لَهُمْ فِيهَا زَفِيرٌ وَشَهِيقٌ (١٠٦) خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
مَــا دَامَتِ السَّمَوَاتُ وَالأَرْضُ إِلاَّ مَا شَاءَ رَبُّكَ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ فَعَّالٌ لِّمَا
يُــرِيدُ (١٠٧) وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ سُعِدُوا فَفِي الجَنَّةِ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا مَا دَامَتِ
السَّمَوَاتُ وَالأَرْضُ إِلاَّ مَا شَاءَ رَبُّكَ عَطَاءً غَيْرَ مَجْذُوذٍ (١٠٨)﴾

[هود]

﴿*The day it arrives, no soul shall speak except by His leave: of those (gathered) some will be wretched and some will be blessed. Those who are wretched shall be in the fire: there will be for them therein (nothing but) the heaving of sighs and sobs. They will dwell therein for all the time that the heavens and the earth endure, except as thy Lord is the (sure) Accomplisher of what He planneth. And those who are blessed shall be in the Garden: they will dwell therein for all the time that the heavens and the earth endure, except as thy Lord willeth: a gift without break.*﴾

(Hud: 105-108)

On reflecting upon the above Qur'anic verses, we notice that Allah, Most High, when referring to the bliss of the people of Paradise, promises that their bliss will unceasingly endure for it is

"*a gift without break*". In contrast, when referring to the wretched people of the Fire, He, Most High, does not uncover His will towards their stay in the Fire. Therefore, Muslim scholars have differed in interpreting the above-mentioned Qur'anic verses as follows:

Some of them say that Allah, Most High, has conditioned their stay in the Fire by the existence of the earth and the heavens which will be inevitably replaced as Allah, Most High, says,

﴿يَوْمَ تُبَدَّلُ الأَرْضُ غَيْرَ الأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَوَاتُ ...﴾ [إبراهيم: ٤٨]

﴿*One day the earth will be changed to a different earth, and so will be the heavens...*﴾ (Ibrahim: 48)

Accordingly, the disbelievers will not stay in the Fire forever.

Imam Ahmad reported that `Abdullah Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) said that there would come a day when Hell closes up its gates for no one would be in it after its inhabitants dwell therein for ages. Likewise, `Umar Ibn Al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) asserted that if the people of Hell stay in it for a long time, there will be a day when they depart it. This view was also confirmed by Ibn Mas`ud and Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with them both).

Ibn Taimyiah said that the above view was held by `Umar Ibn Al-Khattab, Ibn `Abbas, Ibn Mas`ud, Abu Hurairah, Al-Hasan Al-Bisiri, Hammad Ibn Salamah, `Ali Ibn Talhah Al-Walbi, and other commentators of the Qur'an.

In his *Tafsir*, Ar-Razi said that a group of scholars held the opinion that the torment of the people of Hell will come to an end since Allah, Most High, says in the Glorious Qur'an,

﴿فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ شَقُوا فَفِي النَّارِ لَهُمْ فِيهَا زَفِيرٌ وَشَهِيقٌ (١٠٦) خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا مَا دَامَتِ السَّمَوَاتُ وَالأَرْضُ إِلاَّ مَا شَاءَ رَبُّكَ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ فَعَّالٌ لِّمَا يُرِيدُ (١٠٧)﴾ [هود]

﴾*Those who are wretched shall be in the fire: there will be for them therein (nothing but) the heaving of sighs and sobs. They will dwell therein for all the time that the heavens and the earth endure, except as thy Lord is the (sure) Accomplisher of what He planneth.*﴿

(Hud: 106-107)

﴿إِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ كَانَتْ مِرْصَاداً (٢١) لِلطَّاغِينَ مَآباً (٢٢) لابِثِينَ فِيهَا أَحْقَاباً (٢٣)﴾ [النبأ]

﴾*Truly, Hell is as a place of ambush, for the transgressors a place of destination; they will dwell therein for ages.*﴿

(An-Naba': 21-23)

Here, I want to ask you, O Christian missionaries, have you got yourselves acquainted with the above-mentioned opinions of the outstanding Muslim scholars when you asked about the permanent dwelling in Hell! Rather, have you read what is stated in your Book about Hell and the everlasting torment therein!

As to those who ask about mercy in Islam, I would like to ask them about the mercy of the church when it adopted what was called "Courts of Acquisition" and killed and even burnt alive a great number of scholars and scientists the matter that resulted in the delay of the European Renaissance! Where was the mercy and equity of the Roman Church when it confiscated the surrounding lands of Rome, which were known as States of the Church?

Finally, I hope you could fairly reflect on the aforementioned examples of inequity and ruthlessness of your *god* before asking about the *mercy* and *equity* of Islam and its Lord, Most High.

The Fourth Question

Q. If Islam is the true religion – as you claim – why are Muslims people of bad manners and appearance and why do disorder, chaos, inequity, and backwardness characterize their countries?

A. Judging Islam through the conduct of some of its adherents is regarded as bias, crookedness, and inclination towards untruthfulness and whims, since this judgment considers the blemishes and neglects all that is glittering and shining.

In fact, a fair scientific study should be free from bias and personal tendencies and should be based on comprehensiveness and honesty. For example, it is unfair to evaluate the principles of the French Revolution through the actions of those who were involved therein, the actions of Napoleon, or the actions made by France in the occupied territories.

However, if it is necessary to judge Islam according to the Muslims' status quo, you should consider their civilization when European rulers, scholars, and scientists used to travel to the Islamic State seeking knowledge. For example,

in the era of `Abdur-Rahman Al-Nasir, the Christian countries surrendered to the former and their delegations came to him declaring their complete submission. However, he kindly and gently received and treated them all.

Necessity for a Criterion

Your question concerning the backwardness of Muslims is groundless as long as you have no criterion to base your judgment on.

Throughout history, thinkers and philosophers have differed in deciding the meaning of progression and backwardness.

Plato, for instance, has admitted that progression means the application of the supreme morals to life. To achieve this goal, he advocated the idea of socialism.

Furthermore, the Sophists have denied the existence of reality claiming that there is no reality for anything. Rather, all depends on each person, i.e., if a person sees something real, it will be real, while if he sees it unreal, it will be unreal.

The Epicurean advocates have held the opinion that progression signifies the achievement of physical pleasures and material interests.

Likewise, non-Muslim philosophers and thinkers in the modern age have differed on

defining the precise concepts of progression and backwardness.

Friedrich Nietzsche, for example, has offended the Christian morals, advocated the morals of the SUPERMAN, rejected the morals of the publics, and argued for the morals of the high classes.

Jean Paul Sartre has inclined to the idea of the Epicurean advocates.

Spinoza, a Jewish philosopher whom the Jews declared as apostate, has held the view that all sciences should be devoted to attaining a sole goal, namely the ultimate perfection. Thus, all sciences that do not lead to this goal are of no avail. He, also, has denied the moral freedom.

Moreover, it is historically well-known that the European Renaissance has been based on the principles of the Enlightenment age which consisted of five words: the individual, reason, nature, progression, and pleasure. So, the moral values have had no place in the program of that Renaissance which resulted in committing several crimes against humanity at the hands of the Westerners, as long as they gained joys or interests irrespective of others' loss or damage.

The Islamic Perspective

Islam, the true religion of Allah, has come to amend man's stance towards himself, life, and the entire world.

Therefore, adherents of this religion are seekers of international welfare, goodness, and truth. The Glorious Qur'an describes the Muslim nation, saying,

﴿وَلْتَكُن مِّنكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ وَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ (١٠٤)﴾ [آل عمران]

﴿Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: they are the ones to attain felicity.﴾

(Al 'Imran: 104)

In Islam, universality - and not locality – characterizes progression. That was the very reason behind spreading equity, welfare, and prosperity all over the world under the banner of Islam. Therefore, the international nation of Islam was successfully established whereas Plato has failed to found even his avowed republic.

In short, the Islamic criteria set for progression depends on the principle that man should reform and amend his own self as well as others until equity, goodness, and prosperity prevail all over the world.

Muslims' Morals

The Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), has outlined the target of his mission, saying,

"In fact, I have been sent (by Allah) to perfect the good morals."

Likewise, Allah, Most High, points out the objectives of the Glorious Qur'an, saying

﴿إِنَّ اللَّـهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَى وَيَنْهَى عَنِ الفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ (٩٠)﴾ [النحل]

﴿*Allah commands justice, the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin, and he forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice and rebellion: He instructs you, that ye may receive admonition.*﴾ (An-Nahl: 90)

Apparently, the above Qur'anic verse comprises three commands and three prohibitions. In *Surat* Al-An`am, Allah, Most High, proclaims the ten instructions, saying,

﴿قُلْ تَعَالَوْا أَتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ أَلاَّ تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئاً وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَاناً وَلاَ تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلاَدَكُم مِّنْ إِمْلاقٍ نَّحْنُ نَرْزُقُكُمْ وَإِيَّاهُمْ وَلاَ تَقْرَبُوا الفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ وَلاَ تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلاَّ بِالْحَقِّ ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُم بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ (١٥١) وَلاَ تَقْرَبُوا مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ إِلاَّ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَأَوْفُوا الكَيْلَ وَالْمِيزَانَ بِالْقِسْطِ لاَ نُكَلِّفُ نَفْساً إِلاَّ وُسْعَهَا وَإِذَا قُلْتُمْ فَاعْدِلُوا وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَى وَبِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ أَوْفُوا ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُم بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

﴿١٥٢﴾ وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيماً فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلاَ تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ
بِكُمْ عَن سَبِيلِهِ ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُم بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٥٣﴾﴾ [الأنعام]

﴿*Say: Come, I will rehearse what Allah hath (really) prohibited you from: join not anything as equal with Him; be good to your parents; kill not your children on a plea of want; We provide sustenance for you and for them; come not nigh to shameful deeds, whether open or secret; take not life, which Allah hath made sacred, except by way of justice and law: thus doth He command you, that ye may learn wisdom. And come not nigh to the orphan's property, except to improve it, until he attains the age of full strength; give measure and weight with (full) justice; no burden do We place on any soul, but that which it can bear; whenever ye speak, speak justly, even if a near relative is concerned; and fulfill the Covenant of Allah: thus doth He command you, that ye may remember. Verily, this is my way, leading straight: follow it: follow not (other) paths: they will scatter you about from His (great) path: thus doth He command you, that ye may be righteous.*﴾

(Al-An`am: 151-153)

The above ten instructions consist of five commands and five prohibitions as follows:

First: The five prohibitions:

1- join not anything as equal with Him (Allah),
2- kill not your children on a plea of want,
3- come not nigh to shameful deeds,
4- take not life, which Allah hath made sacred, and
5- come not nigh to the orphan's property.

Second: The five commands:

1- be good to your parents,
2- give measure and weight with (full) justice,
3- whenever you speak, speak justly,
4- fulfill the Covenant of Allah, and
5- this is the way of Muhammad, leading straight: follow it.

Reflecting upon the above-mentioned Qur'anic verses, we notice that the Qur'anic instructions aim at spreading justice, truth, equality, virtue, and good morals everywhere. Also, we notice that, in the Glorious Qur'an, commands come side by side with prohibitions. Below are other Qur'anic verses that explain the Islamic morals:

﴿وَقَضَى رَبُّكَ أَلاَّ تَعْبُدُوا إِلاَّ إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَاناً إِمَّا يَبْلُغَنَّ
عِندَكَ الكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلاهُمَا فَلاَ تَقُل لَّهُمَا أُفٍّ وَلاَ تَنْهَرْهُمَا
وَقُل لَّهُمَا قَوْلاً كَرِيماً (٢٣) وَاخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ

وَقُــل رَّبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيراً (٢٤) رَّبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا فِي
نُفُوسِكُمْ إِن تَكُونُوا صَالِحِينَ فَإِنَّهُ كَانَ لِلأَوَّابِينَ غَفُوراً (٢٥) وَآتِ
ذَا الْقُــرْبَى حَقَّهُ وَالْمِسْكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَلاَ تُبَذِّرْ تَبْذِيراً (٢٦) إِنَّ
الْمُبَذِّرِينَ كَانُوا إِخْوَانَ الشَّيَاطِينِ وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِرَبِّهِ كَفُوراً (٢٧)
وَإِمَّــا تُعْرِضَنَّ عَنْهُمُ ابْتِغَاءَ رَحْمَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكَ تَرْجُوهَا فَقُل لَّهُمْ قَوْلاً
مَّيْسُوراً (٢٨) وَلاَ تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَى عُنُقِكَ وَلاَ تَبْسُطْهَا كُلَّ
الْبَسْطِ فَتَقْعُدَ مَلُوماً مَّحْسُوراً (٢٩)﴾ [الإسراء]

﴿*Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship none but Him, and that ye be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in thy life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour. And, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say: my Lord, bestow on them Thy mercy even as they cherished me in childhood. Your Lord knoweth best what is in your hearts: if ye do deeds of righteousness, verily He is most forgiving to those who turn to Him again and again (in true penitence). And render to the kindred their due rights, as (also) to those in want, and to the wayfarer: but squander not (your wealth) in the manner of a spendthrift. Verily spendthrifts are brothers of the evil ones; and the evil one is to his Lord (himself) ungrateful. And even if thou hast to turn away from them pursuit of the*

mercy from thy Lord which thou dost expect, yet speak to them a word of easy kindness. Make not thy hand tied (like a niggard's) to thy neck, nor stretch it forth to its utmost reach, so that thou become blameworthy and destitute. Verily thy Lord doth provide sustenance in abundance for whom He pleaseth, and He provideth in a just measure for He doth know and regard all His servants. Kill not your children for fear of want: We shall provide sustenance for them as well as for you, verily the killing of them is a great sin; nor come nigh to adultery: for it is a shameful (deed) and an evil, opening the road (to other evils); nor take life which Allah has made sacred except for just cause. And if anyone is slain wrongfully, We have given his heir authority (to demand retaliation – or blood-money - or to forgive): but let him not exceed bounds in the matter of taking life; for he is helped (by the Law). Come not nigh to the orphan's property except to improve it, until he attains the age of full strength; and fulfill (every) engagement, for (every) engagement will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning). Give full measure when ye measure, and weigh with a balance that is straight: that is the most fitting and the most advantageous in the final determination. And pursue not that of which thou hast no knowledge; for every act of

hearing, or of seeing or of (feeling in) the heart will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning); nor walk on the earth with insolence: for thou cannot rend the earth asunder, nor reach the mountains in height. Of all such things the evil is hateful in the sight of thy Lord. There are among the (precepts of) wisdom, which thy Lord has revealed to thee. Take not, with Allah, another object of worship, lest thou shouldst be thrown into Hell, blameworthy and rejected.﴾

(Al-Isra': 23-29)

﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الحِكْمَةَ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ وَمَن يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ
لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ (١٢) وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَانُ لابْنِهِ
وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ يَا بُنَيَّ لاَ تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ (١٣)
وَوَصَّيْنَا الإِنسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْناً عَلَى وَهْنٍ وَفِصَالُهُ فِي
عَامَيْنِ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ (١٤) وَإِن جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَى
أَن تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلاَ تُطِعْهُمَا وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا
مَعْرُوفاً وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا
كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (١٥) يَا بُنَيَّ إِنَّهَا إِن تَكُ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ فَتَكُن
فِي صَخْرَةٍ أَوْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ أَوْ فِي الأَرْضِ يَأْتِ بِهَا اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ (١٦) يَا بُنَيَّ أَقِمِ الصَّلاَةَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَانْهَ عَنِ
الْمُنكَرِ وَاصْبِرْ عَلَى مَا أَصَابَكَ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الأُمُورِ (١٧) وَلاَ
تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلاَ تَمْشِ فِي الأَرْضِ مَرَحاً إِنَّ اللَّهَ لاَ يُحِبُّ

كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿١٨﴾ وَاقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ وَاغْضُضْ مِن صَوْتِكَ إِنَّ أَنكَرَ الأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ الحَمِيرِ ﴿١٩﴾﴾ [لقمان]

﴿We bestowed (in the past) Wisdom on Luqman: Show (thy) gratitude to Allah. Any who is (so) grateful does so to profit of his own soul: but if any is ungrateful, verily Allah is free of all wants, worthy of all praise. Behold, Luqman said to his son by way of instruction: O my son join not in worship (others) with Allah: for false worship is indeed the highest wrong doing. And We have enjoined on man (to be good) to his parents: in travail upon travail did his mother bear him, and in years twain was his weaning: (hear the command), show gratitude to Me and to thy parents: to Me is (thy final) Goal. But if they strive to make thee join in worship with Me things of which thou hast no knowledge, obey them not; yet bear them company in this life with justice (and consideration), and follow the way of those who turn to Me (in love): In the End the return of you all is to Me, and I will tell you the truth (and meaning) of all that ye did. O my son (said Luqman), if there be (but) the weight of a mustard seed and it were (hidden) in a rock, or (anywhere) in the heavens or on earth, Allah will bring it forth: for Allah understands the finest mysteries, (and) is well acquainted (with them). O my son establish regular prayer, enjoin what is just, and forbid

what is wrong: and bear with patient constancy whate'er betide thee; for this is firmness in (the conduct of) affairs. And swell not thy cheek (for pride) at men nor walk in insolence through the earth; for Allah loveth not any arrogant boaster. And be moderate in the pace, and lower thy voice; for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of the ass.﴾

(Luqman: 12-19)

It is noteworthy that morals, in Islam, are of general nature, i.e., Muslims are required to deal with all people - irrespective of their religion, race, or sex – according to these morals. In contrast, the instructions of the Bible make distinctions between people. For example, we read in *Deuteronomy*,

"You may lend on interest to a foreigner, but to your brother you shall not lend on interest."

(*Deuteronomy* 23: 20)

Accordingly, these Biblical instructions forbid its adherents to deal with interest amongst themselves whereas with foreigners – adherents of other religions – they are blameless to accept interest.

Objectives of Morals in Islam

Morals, in Islam, are meant to purify and rectify one's soul, mind, and body, and to reform the whole world.

Speaking about the purification of the soul, the Glorious Qur'an states,

﴿وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا (٧) فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا (٨) قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن
زَكَّاهَا (٩) وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّاهَا (١٠)﴾ [الشمس]

﴿*By the soul, and the proportion and order given to it; and its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right; truly he succeeds that purifies it, and he fails that corrupts it!*﴾

(Ash-Shams: 7-10)

As to the mind, the Glorious Qur'an calls people to think and use their minds so as to reach the truth. For instance, it unequivocally reproaches some people, who do not use their minds to come to realize the truth, saying,

﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا أَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا
أَوَ لَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ لاَ يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْئاً وَلاَ يَهْتَدُونَ (١٧٠)﴾ [البقرة]

﴿*When it is said to them: 'Follow what Allah hath revealed:' They say: 'Nay! We shall follow the ways of our fathers:' What! Even though their fathers were void of wisdom and guidance?*﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 170)

With regard to the purification and beautification of one's body, the Glorious Qur'an says,

﴿يَا بَنِي آدَمَ قَدْ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاساً يُوَارِي سَوْءَاتِكُمْ وَرِيشاً وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوَى ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ ذَلِكَ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ (٢٦)﴾

[الأعراف]

﴿O ye Children of Adam! We shall have bestowed raiment upon you to cover your shame, as well as to be an adornment to you. But the raiment of righteousness - that is the best. Such are among the Signs of Allah, that they may receive admonition!﴾

(Al-A`raf: 26)

﴿يَـا بَنِي آدَمَ خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلاَ تُسْـرِفُوا إِنَّـهُ لاَ يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ (٣١) قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي أَخْـرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ قُلْ هِيَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا خَالِصَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ كَذَلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ (٣٢)﴾

[الأعراف]

﴿O Children of Adam! Wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer: eat and drink: but waste not, for Allah loveth not the wasters. Say: Who hath forbidden the beautiful (gifts) of Allah, which He hath produced for His servants, and the things, clean and pure, (which He hath provided) for sustenance? Say: They are, in the life of this world, for those who believe, (and) purely for them on the Day of Judgment thus do We explain the Signs in detail for those who understand.﴾

(Al-A`raf: 31-32)

On the *Sunnah*, Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said,

> "*Surely, Allah is beautiful and loves beauty.*"
> (Reported by Muslim)

> "*Assuredly, Allah, Most High, is good and loves goodness, is clean and loves cleanliness, is generous and loves generosity, is hospitable and loves hospitality. So keep your rooms and courtyards clean, and do not be like the Jews.*"
> (Reported by At-Tirmidhi)

Perfection, likewise, is one the objectives of Islamic morals. This objective is maintained in more than one verse in the Glorious Qur'an. Below are some examples:

﴿ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلاً عَبْداً مَّمْلُوكاً لاَّ يَقْدِرُ عَلَى شَيْءٍ وَمَن رَّزَقْنَاهُ مِنَّا
رِزْقاً حَسَناً فَهُوَ يُنفِقُ مِنْهُ سِرّاً وَجَهْراً هَلْ يَسْتَوُونَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ بَلْ
أَكْثَرُهُمْ لاَ يَعْلَمُونَ (٧٥) وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلاً رَّجُلَيْنِ أَحَدُهُمَا أَبْكَمُ لاَ
يَقْدِرُ عَلَى شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ كَلٌّ عَلَى مَوْلاهُ أَيْنَمَا يُوَجِّههُّ لاَ يَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ
هَلْ يَسْتَوِي هُوَ وَمَن يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَهُوَ عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ (٧٦)﴾
[النحل]

﴿*Allah sets forth the parable (of two men: one) a slave under the dominion of another; he has no power of any sort; and (the other) a man on whom We have bestowed goodly favours from Ourselves, and he spends thereof (freely), privately and publicly: are the two equal? (By*

no means;) praise be to Allah. But most of them understand not. Allah sets forth (another) parable of two men: one of them dumb, with no power of any sort; a wearisome burden is he to his master; whichever way he directs him, he brings no good: is such a man equal with one who commands justice, and is on a straight way?﴿

(An-Nahl: 75-76)

﴿أَمَّـــنْ هُوَ قَانتٌ آنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ سَاجِداً وَقَائِماً يَحْذَرُ الآخِرَةَ وَيَرْجُو رَحْمَـــةَ رَبِّهِ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لاَ يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُوْلُوا الأَلْبَابِ (٩)﴾ [الزمر]

﴾*Is one who worships devoutly during the hours of the night prostrating himself or standing (in adoration), who takes heed of the Hereafter, and who places his hope in the Mercy of his Lord (like one who does not)? Say: Are those equal, those who know and those who do not know? It is those who are endowed with understanding that receive admonition.*﴿

(Az-Zumar: 9)

In short, morals in Islam are meant to achieve two main objectives: Beautification and perfection.

The Muslim and the Western Societies

In the Western societies, every individual seeks his personal interest irrespective of others'

rights. Similarly, Western countries long for their own interests even at the expense of equity and truth. These morals which prevail in the West result in the dissolution of the society, the destruction of families, the appearance of illegal children, the spread of obscenity, the increase of crimes, drugs, and violence, and the practice of the so-called homosexuality and rape, etc.

Woman, in the West, has missed her dignity and honor. If we look straight at the West, we find that woman is not really in a pleasing position. Her status is not enviable. She has to work so hard to earn her living. She enjoys some sort of liberty which, in some cases, amounts to libertinism. To get to where she is nowadays, woman struggled hard for decades and even centuries. To gain the right of learning and the freedom of work and earning, she had to offer painful sacrifices and give up many of her natural rights. To establish her status as a human being, she paid – in advance – too much. Yet, in spite of all these costly sacrifices and painful struggle, she has not acquired what Islam has established by a Divine decree for the Muslim woman.

The Muslim society, in contrast, believes in Allah, the One and Only, and does not worship lusts or material pleasures. The family, the core of the Muslim society, is distinguished by solidarity, mercy, reverence and affection.

In the Muslim society, the well-to-do people are required to support the poor through the institution of *Zakah*, which is one of the Five Pillars of Islam.

Muslims are commanded by the Glorious Qur'an and the purified *Sunnah* of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to enjoin what is good and to forbid all forms of evil and obscenity.

Woman, in Islam, is not asked to go to work to earn her livelihood. The status of the Muslim woman is something unique, something novel, and something that has no similarity in any other systems. Islam protects the dignity of woman, honors her, highly estimates her role in the society, and respects her very nature.

The Muslim society respects and maintains the aged, cares for the young, supports the orphan and the widow, aids the oppressed and the weak, welcomes the seeker of knowledge, fulfills its commitments, and sticks to good manners in dealing with all peoples.

Nevertheless, crimes, drugs, obscenity, violence, homosexuality, and rape do not prevail in the Muslim society in spite of the occurrence of some individual cases.

Finally, I would like to ask how can you rely upon some Muslims' misbehavior to form a complete and true portrait for the religion of Islam? Also, how dare you mix the truth with falsehood in raising such a question?

To be fair, you should not hold the status quo of Muslims as evidence for your judgment against Islam. Rather, you should ask why Muslims have become backward whereas their religion is the real and true cause of their progression.

The Fifth Question

Q. A crime took place in Saudi Arabia; a Muslim killed a non-Muslim and the authorities did not sentence the Muslim to death in retaliation for his crime. On asking why, they told us that this was done according to the instructions of Prophet Muhammad? Is this your equity?

A. Since the 2nd century of Hijrah, or even before that time, some eminent Muslim jurists as Imam Abu Hanifah held the opinion that the Muslim who kills a non-Muslim (living in the Muslim state from amongst the People of the Book who are known in the Islamic terminology as *Ahl Adh-Dimmah* or non-Muslim who concluded a peace-treaty with Muslims) should be killed in retaliation for his crime.

Since the age of Ar-Rashid, the judge of Baghdad, Abu Yusuf, has proclaimed the opinion that the Muslim who kills a non-Muslim should be killed.

The above legal verdict depends on the general nature in the following Qur'anic verses:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُواْ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ فِي الْقَتْلَى الْحُرُّ بِالْحُرِّ وَالْعَبْدُ بِالْعَبْدِ وَالأُنثَى بِالأُنثَى فَمَنْ عُفِيَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ

فَاتِّبَاعٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَدَاءٌ إِلَيْهِ بِإِحْسَانٍ ذَلِكَ تَخْفِيفٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ فَمَنِ اعْتَدَى بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (١٧٨)﴾ [البقرة]

﴿*O ye who believe! The law of equality is prescribed to you in cases of murder: the free for the free, the slave for the slave, the woman for the woman. But if any remission is made by the brother of the slain, then grant any reasonable demand, and compensate him with handsome gratitude. This is a concession and a mercy from your Lord. After this whoever exceeds the limits shall be in grave penalty.*﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 178)

﴿وَكَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَا أَنَّ النَّفْسَ بِالنَّفْسِ وَالْعَيْنَ بِالْعَيْنِ وَالأَنفَ بِالأَنفِ وَالأُذُنَ بِالأُذُنِ وَالسِّنَّ بِالسِّنِّ وَالْجُرُوحَ قِصَاصٌ فَمَن تَصَدَّقَ بِهِ فَهُوَ كَفَّارَةٌ لَّهُ وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ (٤٥)﴾ [المائدة]

﴿*We ordained therein for them: life for life, eye for eye, nose for nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and wounds equal for equal. But if any one remits the retaliation by way of charity, it is an act of atonement for himself. And if any fail to judge by (the light of) what Allah hath revealed, they are (no better than) wrongdoers.*﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 45)

In the *Sunnah*, we read also the *Hadith* narrated by Al-Bayhaqi indicating that Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) killed a Muslim in retaliation for his killing a non-Muslim who had concluded a peace-treaty with Muslims, saying,

"I am (the Prophet of Allah) the most honored one who should keep his covenants."

Moreover, according to the Islamic jurisprudence, the Muslim's hand should be cut off if he steals a non-Muslim's property as long as the latter is not at war with Muslims. The prohibition of blood-shedding, of course, is greater than stealing others' properties.

Accordingly, the man should be killed if he kills a woman or a child and the free man should be killed if he kills a slave one.

In conclusion, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that what you have mentioned in your question, namely the rejection of killing a Muslim if he kills a non-Muslim, is not an agreed upon point of view in the Islamic Law. So, you should base your questions on all sides of the issue, not to concentrate on a particular aspect and ignore or neglect the others.

The Sixth Question

Q. Your Book, the Qur'an, contains several contradictions; it is incoherent, and it comprises numerous repetitions. How do you regard it as a miracle then?

A. Your question is not a novel one. Rather, it is based on the false claim of the preceding Orientalists that the Qur'an is the work of Muhammad. By the same token, your question can be traced back to the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) when the Divine Revelation was descending. In this connection, I would like you to reflect on what the Glorious Qur'an itself has recorded of similar questions, saying,

﴿وَإِذَا بَدَّلْنَا آيَةً مَّكَانَ آيَةٍ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُنَزِّلُ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنتَ
مُفْتَرٍ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لاَ يَعْلَمُونَ (١٠١) قُلْ نَزَّلَهُ رُوحُ الْقُدُسِ مِن رَّبِّكَ
بِالْحَقِّ لِيُثَبِّتَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَى لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ (١٠٢) وَلَقَدْ
نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّمَا يُعَلِّمُهُ بَشَرٌ لِّسَانُ الَّذِي يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ أَعْجَمِيٌّ
وَهَذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ مُّبِينٌ (١٠٣) إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لاَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ لاَ
يَهْدِيهِمُ اللَّهُ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (١٠٤) إِنَّمَا يَفْتَرِي الْكَذِبَ الَّذِينَ لاَ
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ (١٠٥)﴾ [النحل]

﴿*When We substitute one revelation for another, and Allah knows best what He reveals (in stages), they say, thou art but a forger: but most of them understand not. Say, 'The Holy Spirit has brought the revelation from thy Lord in truth, in order to strengthen those who believe, and as a guide and glad tidings to Muslims.' We know indeed that they say, it is a man that teaches him. The tongue of him they wickedly point to is notably foreign, while this is Arabic, pure and clear. Those who believe not in the Signs of Allah, Allah will not guide them, and theirs will be a grievous penalty. It is those who believe not in the Signs of Allah, that forge falsehood: it is they who lie.*﴾

(Al-Nahl: 101-105)

﴿وَقَـــالَ الَّذِيـــنَ كَفَرُوا إِنْ هَذَا إِلاَّ إِفْكٌ افْتَرَاهُ وَأَعَانَهُ عَلَيْهِ قَوْمٌ آخَرُونَ فَقَدْ جَاءُوا ظُلْماً وَزُوراً (٤) وَقَالُوا أَسَاطِيرُ الأَوَّلِينَ اكْتَتَبَهَا فَهِـــيَ تُمْلَى عَلَيْهِ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلاً (٥) قُلْ أَنزَلَهُ الَّذِي يَعْلَمُ السِّرَّ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفُوراً رَّحِيماً (٦)﴾ [الفرقان]

﴿*But the disbelievers say: 'Naught is this but a lie which he has forged, and others have helped him at it. In truth it is they who have put forward an iniquity and a falsehood'. And they say: 'Tales of the ancients, which he has caused to be written: and they are dictated before him morning and evening'. Say: 'The*

(Qur'an) was sent down by Him Who knows the Mystery (that is) in the heavens and the earth: verily He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.﴾

(Al-Furqan: 4-6)

Now, it becomes clear that those who claim that the Qur'an is the work of Muhammad, they blindly imitate their fore-losers.

The Glorious Qur'an, the very words of Allah, has challenged all mankind to produce even the like of its smallest *Surah* (chapter). It comprises endless and astonishing miracles that stun the fair-minded scientists and prove its Divine nature.

In his well-known "*The Bible, the Qur'an and Science*", Dr. Maurice Bucaill held a comparison between scientific data and statements contained in the Scriptures – the Qur'an and the Bible. The results stunned the author: the Qur'an, most definitely, does not contain a single proposition at variance with the most firmly established modern knowledge. In the conclusion, Dr. Bucaill says, "The comparison of several Biblical and Qur'anic narrations of the same subject shows the existence of fundamental differences between statements in the former, which are scientifically unacceptable, and declarations in the latter, which are in perfect agreement with modern data: this was the case of the Creation and Flood, for example." Amongst the fruits of this

study is that the author embraced Islam for he unswervingly believed in the Divinity of the Glorious Qur'an. In his book, Dr. Bucaill discovered numerous contradictions between the Bible and the scientifically established facts.

However, as to the Christian missionaries' claim that the Glorious Qur'an is "incoherent", it is null and void for they have no knowledge of the Arabic stylistic features. In spite of their eloquence and mastering of Arabic, the Arabs, who belied the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), never depicted the Qur'an as incoherent or contradictory to the Arabic stylistic rules.

Finally, as to your claim that the Qur'an comprises numerous repetitions, it is groundless for the above-mentioned reason, namely you have no profound knowledge of the Arabic stylistic rules. In fact, the Glorious Qur'an has no repetition but it, sometimes, states the same event or story in more than one location. Nevertheless, it adds in each time more and more pieces of information to the narration.

Furthermore, the Glorious Qur'an always varies its mode of expression so as to suit the context of speech as well as the nature of the addressees. So, it uses diverse modes of expression: examples, briefness, expatiation, threat, promise, clarity, metaphor, etc.

In fact, variation in the Glorious Qur'an was one of the challenges faced by the eloquent Arabs when they were called – and they assuredly failed - to produce even a single verse similar to any of the Qur'an's.

The Seventh Question

Q. Your Book, the Qur'an, is unstable in depicting the People of the Book, e.g., in Surat Al `Imran, verse 110, it depicts them as believers, saying, ﴾*Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind. Enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah. If only the People of the Book had Faith: it were best for them: among them are some who have Faith, but most of them are perverted transgressors.*﴿; in the same Surah, verse 85, it announces that only Islam will be acceptable in the Sight of Allah, saying, ﴾*If anyone desires a religion other than Islam (submission to Allah), never will it be accepted of him;and in the Hereafter he will be in the ranks of those who have lost (all spiritual good).*﴿; and in Surat Al-Baqarah, verse 62, it does not regard Islam as a condition for the acceptance of righteous deeds, saying, ﴾*Those who believe (in the Qur'an), and those who follow the Jewish (scriptures), and the Christians and the Sabians, any who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and work righteousness, shall have their reward with their Lord: on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.*﴿

Likewise, your scholars are in disagreement regarding this question. Some of them say that the People of the Book are disbelievers; others hold a contrary point of view; and still others adopt the opinion that only the Muslims will enter Paradise.

Your Qur'an, itself, has differed in depicting the People of the Book. See examples below:

﴿لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ قُلْ فَمَن يَمْلِكُ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئاً إِنْ أَرَادَ أَن يُهْلِكَ الْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهُ وَمَن فِي الأَرْضِ جَمِيعاً وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (١٧)﴾ [المائدة]

﴿In blasphemy indeed are those that say that Allah is Christ the son of Mary. Say: Who then hath the least power against Allah, if His will were to destroy Christ the son of Mary, his mother, and all every one that is on the earth? For to Allah belongeth the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between. He createth what He pleaseth. For Allah hath power over all things.﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 17)

﴿لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَقَالَ الْمَسِيحُ يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ مَن يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ

اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَاهُ النَّارُ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنصَارٍ ﴿٧٢﴾ لَقَدْ كَفَرَ
الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ ثَالِثُ ثَلاثَةٍ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلاَّ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ وَإِن لَّمْ
يَنتَهُوا عَمَّا يَقُولُونَ لَيَمَسَّنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٣﴾﴾
[المائدة]

﴿*They do blaspheme who say: 'Allah is Christ the son of Mary.' But said Christ: 'O Children of Israel! Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord.' Whoever joins other gods with Allah - Allah will forbid him the Garden, and the Fire will be his abode. There will for the wrongdoers be no one to help. They do blaspheme who say: 'Allah is one of three in a trinity': for there is no god except One God. If they desist not from their word (of blasphemy), verily a grievous penalty will befall the blasphemers among them.*﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 72-73)

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لاَ تَتَّخِذُوا الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَكُمْ هُزُواً وَلَعِباً
مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَالْكُفَّارَ أَوْلِيَاءَ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِن
كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾﴾ [المائدة]

﴿*O ye who believe! Take not for friends and protectors those who take your religion for a mockery or sport - whether among those who received the Scripture before you, or among those who reject*

Faith; but fear ye Allah, if ye have Faith (indeed).﴿

(Al-Ma'idah: 57)

﴿لُعِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَلَى لِسَانِ دَاوُودَ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ (٧٨)﴾ [المائدة]

﴾Curses were pronounced on those among the Children of Israel who rejected Faith, by the tongue of David and of Jesus, the son of Mary: because they disobeyed and persisted in excesses.﴿

(Al-Ma'idah: 78)

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ لاَ تَعْبُدُونَ إِلاَّ اللَّهَ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَاناً وَذِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْناً وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ إِلاَّ قَلِيلاً مِّنكُمْ وَأَنتُم مُّعْرِضُونَ (٨٣)﴾ [البقرة]

﴾And remember We took a Covenant from the Children of Israel (to this effect): worship none but Allah; treat with kindness your parents and kindred, and orphans and those in need; speak fair to the people; be steadfast in prayer; and practise regular Charity. Then did ye turn back, except a few among you, and ye backslide (even now).﴿

(Al-Baqarah: 83)

﴿وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ نَبَذَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لاَ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾﴾ [البقرة]

﴿***And when there came to them a Messenger from Allah, confirming what was with them, a party of the People of the Book threw away the Book of Allah behind their backs. As if (it had been something) they did not know!***﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 101)

﴿مَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَلاَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ أَن يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُم مِّنْ خَيْرٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿١٠٥﴾﴾ [البقرة]

﴿***It is never the wish* of those without Faith among the People of the Book, nor of the pagans, that anything good should come down to you from your Lord. But Allah will choose for His special mercy whom He will - for Allah is Lord of Grace abounding.***﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 105)

﴿قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ عَلَى مَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٨﴾﴾ [آل عمران]

﴿*Say: O People of the Book why reject ye the Signs of Allah, when Allah is Himself witness to all ye do?*﴾

(Al `Imran: 98)

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أُوْلَئِكَ هُمْ شَرُّ الْبَرِيَّةِ (٦)﴾ [البينة]

﴿*Those who reject (Truth), among the People of the Book and among the Polytheists, will be in Hell fire, to dwell therein (for aye). They are the worst of creatures.*﴾

(Al-Bayyinah: 6)

A. Three factors stand behind the mistake observed in the above question:

1- Misunderstanding of the significance of the act of referring to "the People of the Book" in each context as well as grasping not the sense of the term "Islam" in the Qur'an,

2- Quoting what superficially supports their claims while ignoring the other Qur'anic verses, and

3- Sticking not to loyalty and faithfulness in seeking the truth.

When the Glorious Qur'an intends to reprimand the People of the Book for their crookedness and

deviation, it addresses them by the title: ﴿*those who have been given a portion of the Book*﴾, as a reference to their negligence of some of what Allah, Most High, has revealed. Moreover, when the Glorious Qur'an calls them - the People of the Book - to believe in the prophethood of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), it addresses them by the title: ﴿*those to whom We have given the Book*﴾. And, when it intends to generalize its address to them, it addresses them by the title: ﴿*O People of the Book*﴾.

Now, it becomes clear that the Glorious Qur'an is so accurate and fair in addressing the People of the Book that it neither ignores the virtues of the righteous and fair-minded ones amongst them, nor disregards the crookedness of those who are wicked and unfaithful. In this connection, the Glorious Qur'an unequivocally proclaims,

﴿لَيْسُوا سَوَاءً مِّنْ أَهْلِ الكِتَابِ أُمَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ يَتْلُونَ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ آنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ (١١٣) يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ وَيُسَارِعُونَ فِي الخَيْرَاتِ وَأُوْلَئِكَ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ (١١٤) وَمَا يَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَن يُكْفَرُوهُ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُتَّقِينَ (١١٥)﴾ [آل عمران]

﴿*Not all of them are alike: of the People of the Book are a portion that stand (for the right);*

they rehearse the Signs of Allah all night long, and they prostrate themselves in adoration. They believe in Allah and the Last Day; they enjoin what is right, and forbid what is wrong; and they hasten (in emulation) in (all) good works: they are in the ranks of the righteous. Of the good that they do, nothing will be rejected of them; for Allah knoweth well those that do right.﴾

(Al `Imran: 113-115)

"The righteous" whom the above Qur'anic verses depict are "Muslims", due to the fact that the word "Islam" – according to both the Qur'anic as well as the lexical usage – means the true religion that all Prophets and Messengers have advocated. "The Muslim", according to the Glorious Qur'an, is the person who surrenders to Allah and steers clear of polytheism; and this is the significance of the Qur'anic verse that reads,

﴿وَمَــن يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الإِسْلامِ دِيناً فَلَن يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الآخِرَةِ مِنَ الخَاسِرِينَ (٨٥)﴾ [آل عمران]

﴿*If anyone desires a religion other than Islam (submission to Allah), never will it be accepted of him; and in the Hereafter he will be in the ranks of those who have lost (all spiritual good).*﴾

(Al `Imran: 85)

Thus, the word "Islam" applies to every person who believes in Allah and in the Prophets sent by Allah for him throughout the consecutive ages. So, if one believed in Jesus before the mission of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon them both), he would be depicted as a "Muslim". Yet, after the mission of Muhammad, the final Prophet, no one will be depicted as "Muslim" except he who believes in the prophethood of Muhammad and in all the former Prophets and Messengers of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon them all). This perception is so clear in the Glorious Qur'an that no one except the unfair-minded or the arrogant could doubt it.

Consequently, when the Glorious Qur'an depicts the People of the Book as "believers" or "Muslims", it refers to those who believed in the Prophet of their time as long as there was no other Prophets sent by Allah during their lifetime. Also, in this context, it refers to those who did believe in their Prophet, then they believed in the next Prophet when he happened to be sent to them. In contrast, those who did believe in a Prophet and disbelieved in the former or the latter Prophets are not "believers". Is there any conflict or contradiction in these maxims!

Like the Glorious Qur'an, the Bible discriminated between the wicked and the righteous from amongst its adherents. Jesus, for example, condemned the actions of the religious guides who disbelieved in his mission, saying,

"You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?"

(*Matthew* 23: 33)

Likewise, we read in *Jude* the following:

"And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own homes – these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day."

(*Jude* 1: 6)

In short, Muslims' faith adopts the principle that those who had passed away before the mission of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) while believing in their Prophets, would be rewarded by Allah, Most High, according to the Qur'anic verse that reads,

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَى وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحاً فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلاَ خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلاَ هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ (٦٢)﴾ [البقرة]

﴿*Those who believe, and those who follow the Jewish (scriptures), and the Christians and*

the Sabians, any who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and work righteousness, shall have their reward with their Lord: on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 62)

And, those who believed in their Prophet as well as in Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) shall have double reward with Allah, Most High, as the Qur'an says,

﴿يَـــا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَآمِنُوا بِرَسُولِهِ يُؤْتِكُمْ كِفْلَيْنِ مِن رَّحْمَتِهِ وَيَجْعَل لَّكُمْ نُوراً تَمْشُونَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ (٢٨)﴾ [الحديد]

﴾*O ye that believe! Fear Allah, and believe in His Messenger, and He will bestow on you a double portion of His Mercy: He will provide for you a Light by which ye shall walk (straight in your path), and He will forgive you (your past): for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.*﴾

(Al-Hadid: 28)

Is there any religion, other than Islam, that bridges the gap between all religions in such a manner! Do you aspire to or look for anything else that is more deserving one's esteem and belief?

The Eighth Question

Q. Your religion, Islam, underestimates the status of woman in many aspects:

Woman is treated as a servant and a second-class citizen. Bellow are some proofs:

1- **Your Prophet said, "This worldly life is a joy, and the best of its joys is the good wife."**

2- **In inheritance, man's share is as double as the woman's.**

3- **The act of witnessing offered by a single man equals that of two women.**

4- **Woman is overburdened with many restrictions such as Hijab (Islamic Veil), whereas man is given many privileges over her.**

5- **Numerous Hadiths (traditions) of your Prophet disgrace woman such as: "Had I been permitted to command some person to prostrate himself before another, I would have had commanded the woman to prostrate herself before her husband". And "Amongst the sources of optimism are the vehicle, the woman,**

and the spacious house." Yet, there is not any Hadith that digraces man.

6- **Man is permitted to have four wives, whereas woman is not granted the same right.**

7- **Islamic Law allows the Muslim male to marry non-Muslim women, while the Muslim woman is not permitted to get married to non-Muslims.**

8- **If a wife disobeys her husband, the husband will have the right to beat her, while she is not granted the same right in case her husband disobeys her.**

A. The question of the status of woman in Islam has been the subject of several attacks launched by non-Muslims. So, I have written a book on this subject entitled "*Al-Mar'ah fi Al-Islam: Makanaha wa Makanataha*" (Woman in Islam: Her Position and Status), in which I explained in detail all the aspects relevant to this serious subject, and to which I refer every seeker after truth in this regard. Here, I will briefly answer your question so as to pave the way for those who look forward to know the truth.

Regarding the question of woman's status, I would like to quote the following narration from the Gospel:

"A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, 'Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession.'

Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, 'Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us.'

He answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.'

The woman came and knelt before him. 'Lord, help me!' she said.

He replied, 'It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs.'

'Yes, Lord,' she said, 'but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.'"

(*Matthew* 15: 22-27)

Is there any humiliation to the woman that exceeds what is mentioned above! Rather, is there any disgrace to humanity more than this, namely, depicting all peoples as dogs except the Children of Israel.

The status of woman in your Holy Book is indicated in what is called the "First Sin", i.e., the serpent had seduced Eve who tempted Adam to disobey his Lord. In contrast, Islam does not blame Eve alone for the First Sin. The Glorious Qur'an makes it clear that both Adam and Eve were tempted; that they both sinned; that Allah's

pardon was granted to both after their repentance; and that sAllah addressed them jointly. In this connection, the Glorious Qur'an says,

﴿وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلاَ مِنْهَا رَغَداً حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلاَ تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الْظَّالِمِينَ (٣٥) فَأَزَلَّهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا فِيهِ وَقُلْنَا اهْبِطُواْ بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ وَلَكُمْ فِي الأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَى حِينٍ (٣٦) فَتَلَقَّى آدَمُ مِن رَّبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ (٣٧) قُلْنَا اهْبِطُواْ مِنْهَا جَمِيعاً فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُم مِّنِّي هُدًى فَمَن تَبِعَ هُدَايَ فَلاَ خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلاَ هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ (٣٨) وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ وَكَذَّبُواْ بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ (٣٩)﴾ [البقرة]

﴿*We said: 'O Adam! Dwell thou and thy wife in the Garden; and eat of the bountiful things therein as (where and when) ye will; but approach not this tree, or ye run into harm and transgression.' Then did Satan make them slip from the (Garden), and get them out of the state (of felicity) in which they had been. We said: 'Get ye down, all (ye people), with enmity between yourselves. On earth will be your dwelling place and your means of livelihood - for a time.' Then learnt Adam from his Lord Words of inspiration, and his Lord turned towards him; for He is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful. We said: 'Get ye down all from here; and if, as is sure, there comes to you*

guidance from Me, whosoever follows My guidance, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. But those who reject Faith and belie Our Signs, they shall be Companions of the Fire; they shall abide therein.'﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 35-39)

﴿وَيَـا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الجَنَّةَ فَكُلا مِنْ حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلاَ
تَقْـرَبَا هَـذِهِ الشَّـجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ (١٩) فَوَسْوَسَ لَهُمَا
الشَّيْطَانُ لِيُبْدِيَ لَهُمَا مَا وُورِيَ عَنْهُمَا مِن سَوْءَاتِهِمَا وَقَالَ مَا نَهَاكُمَا
رَبُّكُمَا عَنْ هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةِ إِلاَّ أَن تَكُونَا مَلَكَيْنِ أَوْ تَكُونَا مِنَ الخَالِدِينَ
(٢٠) وَقَاسَمَهُمَا إِنِّي لَكُمَا لَمِنَ النَّاصِحِينَ (٢١) فَدَلاَّهُمَا بِغُرُورٍ فَلَمَّا
ذَاقَـا الشَّجَرَةَ بَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْءَاتُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِن
وَرَقِ الجَـنَّةِ وَنَادَاهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا أَلَمْ أَنْهَكُمَا عَن تِلْكُمَا الشَّجَرَةِ وَأَقُل
لَّكُمَـا إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمَا عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ (٢٢) قَالا رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنفُسَنَا
وَإِن لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الخَاسِرِينَ (٢٣) قَالَ اهْبِطُوا
بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ وَلَكُمْ فِي الأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَى حِينٍ (٢٤)
قَـالَ فِيهَا تَحْيَوْنَ وَفِيهَا تَمُوتُونَ وَمِنْهَا تُخْرَجُونَ (٢٥) يَا بَنِي آدَمَ
قَدْ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاساً يُوَارِي سَوْءَاتِكُمْ وَرِيشاً وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوَى ذَلِكَ
خَـيْرٌ ذَلِـكَ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ (٢٦) يَا بَنِي آدَمَ لاَ
يَفْتِنَنَّكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ كَمَا أَخْرَجَ أَبَوَيْكُم مِّنَ الجَنَّةِ يَنزِعُ عَنْهُمَا لِبَاسَهُمَا
لِـيُرِيَهُمَا سَوْءَاتِهِمَا إِنَّهُ يَرَاكُمْ هُوَ وَقَبِيلُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لاَ تَرَوْنَهُمْ إِنَّا
جَعَلْنَا الشَّيَاطِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ لِلَّذِينَ لاَ يُؤْمِنُونَ (٢٧)﴾ [الأعراف]

﴿O Adam! Dwell thou and thy wife in the Garden, and enjoy (its good things) as ye wish: but approach not this tree or ye run into harm and transgression. Then began Satan to whisper suggestions to them, in order to reveal to them their shame that was hidden from them (before): he said: 'Your Lord only forbade you this tree, lest ye should become angels or such beings as live forever.' And he swore to them both that he was their sincere adviser. So by deceit he brought about their fall: when they tasted of the tree, their shame became manifest to them, and they began to sew together the leaves of the Garden over their bodies. And their Lord called unto them: 'Did I not forbid you that tree, and tell you that Satan was an avowed enemy unto you?' They said: 'Our Lord! We have wronged our own souls: if Thou forgive us not and bestow not upon us Thy Mercy, we shall certainly be lost.' (Allah) said: 'Get ye down, with enmity between yourself. On earth will be your dwelling-place and your means of livelihood - for a time.' He said: 'Therein shall ye live, and therein shall ye die; but from it shall ye be taken out (at last).' O ye Children of Adam! We shall have bestowed raiment upon you to cover your shame, as well as to be an adornment to you. But the raiment of righteousness - that is the best. Such are among the Signs of Allah, that

they may receive admonition! O ye Children of Adam! Let not Satan seduce you, in the same manner as he got your parents, out of the Garden, stripping them of their raiment, to expose their shame: for he and his tribe watch you from a position where ye cannot see them: We made the evil ones friends (only) to those without Faith.﴾

(Al-A`raf: 19-27)

﴿وَلَقَدْ عَهِدْنَا إِلَى آدَمَ مِن قَبْلُ فَنَسِيَ وَلَمْ نَجِدْ لَهُ عَزْماً (١١٥)
وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلاَّ إِبْلِيسَ أَبَى (١١٦)
فَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ إِنَّ هَذَا عَدُوٌّ لَّكَ وَلِزَوْجِكَ فَلاَ يُخْرِجَنَّكُمَا مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ
فَتَشْقَى (١١٧) إِنَّ لَكَ أَلاَّ تَجُوعَ فِيهَا وَلاَ تَعْرَى (١١٨) وَأَنَّكَ لاَ
تَظْمَأُ فِيهَا وَلاَ تَضْحَى (١١٩) فَوَسْوَسَ إِلَيْهِ الشَّيْطَانُ قَالَ يَا آدَمُ
هَلْ أَدُلُّكَ عَلَى شَجَرَةِ الْخُلْدِ وَمُلْكٍ لاَّ يَبْلَى (١٢٠) فَأَكَلا مِنْهَا
فَبَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْءَاتُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِن وَرَقِ الْجَنَّةِ وَعَصَى
آدَمُ رَبَّهُ فَغَوَى (١٢١) ثُمَّ اجْتَبَاهُ رَبُّهُ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ وَهَدَى (١٢٢) قَالَ
اهْبِطَا مِنْهَا جَمِيعاً بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُم مِّنِّي هُدًى فَمَنِ
اتَّبَعَ هُدَايَ فَلاَ يَضِلُّ وَلاَ يَشْقَى (١٢٣)﴾ [طه]

﴿*We had already, beforehand, taken the Covenant of Adam, but he forgot: and We found on his part no firm resolve. When We said to the angles, 'Prostrate yourselves to Adam', they prostrated themselves, but not Iblis: he*

refused. Then We said: 'O Adam! Verily, this is an enemy to thee and thy wife: so let him not get you both out of the Garden, so that thou art landed in misery. There is therein (enough provision) for thee not to go hungry nor to go naked, nor to suffer from thirst, nor from the sun's heat. But Satan whispered evil to him: he said, 'O Adam! Shall I lead thee to the tree of Eternity and to a kingdom that never decays?' In the result, they both ate of the tree, and so their nakedness appeared to them: they began to sew together, for their covering, leaves from the Garden: thus did Adam disobey His Lord, and allow himself to be seduced. But his Lord chose him (for His Grace): He turned to him, and gave him guidance. He said: 'Get ye down, both of you, all together, from the Garden, with enmity one to another: but if, as is sure, there comes to you guidance from Me, whosoever follows My guidance, will not lose his way, nor fall into misery.'﴾

(Taha: 115-123)

In fact, the Glorious Qur'an gives the impression that Adam was more to blame for that First Sin from which emerged prejudice against woman and suspicion of her deeds. But Islam does not justify such prejudice or suspicion because both Adam and Eve were equally in error, and if we are to blame Eve, we should blame Adam as much or even more.

Unlike the Glorious Qur'an, the Gospel presents woman as guilty and sinful for she (Eve) seduced Adam to sin. This doctrine is stated more than once in the Gospel. Below are some examples:

> *"But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ."*
>
> (2 *Corinthians* 11: 3)

> *"A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I don't permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent. For Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner."*
>
> (1 *Timothy* 2: 11-14)

Now, we are in no need of deploring the plight of woman in your societies according to the above-mentioned quotations which is totally contradictory to her status in the Glorious Qur'an.

Islam has given woman rights and privileges, which she has never enjoyed under other religious or constitutional systems. The rights and responsibilities of woman are equal to those of man, but they are not necessarily identical. Since woman is physiologically created different from man, Islam establishes for woman that which suits her nature, gives her full security

and protects her against disgraceful circumstances and uncertain channels of life. Here, it is necessary to grasp the distinction between equality and sameness. Equality and sameness are two quite different things. This difference is understandable because man and woman are not identical, but they are created equals. With this distinction in mind, there is no problem. It is almost impossible to find two identical men or women.

This distinction between equality and sameness is of paramount importance. Equality is desirable, just, fair; but sameness is not. People are not created identical - rather - they are created equals. With this distinction in mind, there is no room to imagine that woman is a creature inferior to man. There is no ground to assume that she is less important than he is just because her rights are not identically the same as his. Had her status been identical with his, she would have been simply a duplicate of him; the matter which is not so. The fact that Islam gives her equal rights – but not identical – shows that it takes her into due consideration, acknowledges her, and recognizes her independent personality.

The Islamic philosophy in dealing with man and woman is based on considering the following:

1- The principle of humanity

2- The principle of sex

In the first area, man and woman are equal and so they bear equal duties and receive equal rights in all relevant aspects: worship, belief, life, virtue, morals, ownership, education, physical needs, etc. In this context, the Glorious Qur'an says,

﴿وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُوْلَئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ (٧١)﴾ [التوبة]

﴿*The Believers, men and women, are protectors, one of another: they enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil: they observe regular prayers, practice regular charity, and obey Allah and His Messenger. On them will Allah pour His Mercy: for Allah is Exalted in power, Wise.*﴾

(At-Tawbah: 71)

In the second area, it would be inequity to deal with woman as the same as man since each one of them is created physiologically different. Accordingly, Islam considers this distinction and gives both of the two sexes what suits their very natures.

[T. The whole status of woman is shown clearly in the Qur'anic verse which reads,

﴿... وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ (٢٢٨)﴾ [البقرة]

﴿*... And women shall have rights similar to the rights against them, according to what is equitable; but men have degree (of advantage) over them. And Allah is Exalted in Power, Wise.*﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 228)

This degree is not a title of supremacy or an authorization of dominance over her. It is to correspond to the extra responsibilities of man and give him some compensation for his unlimited liabilities.

[T. The above-mentioned Qur'anic verse is always interpreted in the light of another Qur'anic verse that reads,

﴿الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ... (٣٤)﴾ [النساء]

﴿*Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the one more (strength) than the other, and because they support them from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient, and guard in (the husband's) absence what Allah would have them guard...*﴾

(An-Nisa': 34)

It is not a higher degree in humanity or in character. Nor is it a dominance of one over the other or suppression of one at the hands of the other. It is a distribution of Allah's Abundance according to the needs of the nature of which Allah is the Maker.

As to what you have quoted of the Prophet's *hadith* that reads: *"Had I been permitted to command some person to prostrate himself before another, I would have had commanded the woman to prostrate herself before her husband"*, it contained an indication that Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) neither commanded any person to prostrate himself before another person, nor he was permitted to do so. Historical records, furthermore, never shows even a single scene in which a Muslim wife prostrates herself before her husband.

Yet, I wonder how dare you ask this question while your Holy Book discloses the fact that a woman prostrated herself before Jesus in order to cure her son, saying,

"A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, 'Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession.'

Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, 'Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us.'

He answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.'

The woman came and knelt before him. 'Lord, help me!' she said.

He replied, 'It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs.'

'Yes, Lord,' she said, 'but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.'"

(*Matthew* 15: 22-27)

As to the act of witnessing made by woman, it is not as half as that of the man as you claim. Rather, in some instances of bearing witness only women are acceptable, that is in cases related to feminine affairs. Whereas in some instances of bearing witness to certain civil contracts two men are required or one man and two women instead. Again, this is not an indication that the woman is held inferior to man. It is a measure of securing the rights of the contracting parties, because woman, as a rule, is not so experienced in practical life as man. This lack of experience may cause loss to any of the parties concerned in a given contract. So, the law requires that at least two women should bear witness accompanied by a man. This is a precautionary measure to guarantee honest transactions and proper dealings among people.

[T. The Glorious Qur'an explores the wisdom behind this rule of Islamic *Shari`ah*, saying,

﴿يَـا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا تَدَايَنتُم بِدَيْنٍ إِلَى أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَاكْتُبُوهُ وَلْيَكْتُب بَّيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌ بِالْعَدْلِ وَلاَ يَأْبَ كَاتِبٌ أَن يَكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ اللَّـهُ فَلْيَكْتُبْ وَلْيُمْلِلِ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ وَلاَ يَبْخَسْ مِنْهُ شَيْئاً فَإِن كَانَ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ سَفِيهاً أَوْ ضَعِيفاً أَوْ لاَ يَسْتَطِيعُ أَن يُمِلَّ هُوَ فَلْيُمْلِلْ وَلِيُّهُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَاسْتَشْهِدُوا شَهِيدَيْنِ مِن رِّجَالِكُمْ فَإِن لَّمْ يَكُونَا رَجُلَيْنِ فَرَجُلٌ وَامْرَأَتَانِ مِمَّن تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ الشُّهَدَاءِ أَن تَضِلَّ إِحْدَاهُمَا فَتُذَكِّرَ إِحْدَاهُمَا الأُخْرَى... (٢٨٢)﴾ [البقرة]

﴿*O ye who believe! When ye deal with each other, in transactions involving future obligations in a fixed period of time, reduce them to writing, let a scribe write down faithfully as between the parties: let not the scribe refuse to write: as Allah has taught him, so let him write. Let him who incurs the liability dictate, but let him fear his Lord Allah, and not diminish ought of what he owes. If the party liable is mentally deficient, or weak, or unable himself to dictate, let his guardian dictate faithfully. And get two witnesses, out of your own men, and if there are not two men, then a man and two women, such as ye choose, for witnesses, so that if one of them errs, the other can remind her...*﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 282)

Accordingly, the wisdom behind this Islamic rule is that if a woman of the witnesses forgets something, the other one will remind her. Or, if she makes an error, due to lack of experience, the other will correct her.]

As to the question regarding inheritance, Islam has given woman a share of inheritance. This share is hers, and no one can take it away from her or disinherit her. In case of inheritance, the question of equality and sameness is fully applicable. In principle, both man and woman are equally entitled to inherit the property of the deceased relatives, but the shares they get may vary. In some instances man receives two shares whereas woman gets only one. This is not a sign of giving preference or supremacy to man over woman.

The reasons why man gets more in these particular instances may be classified as follows:

First, man is the person solely responsible for the complete maintenance of his wife, his family, and any other needy relatives. It is his duty by Law to assume all financial responsibilities and maintain his dependants adequately. All financial burdens are borne by him alone.

Second, in contrast, woman has no financial responsibilities whatsoever except very little of her personal expenses, the highly luxurious things

that she likes to have. She is financially secure and provided for. If she is a wife, her husband is the provider; if she is a mother, it is the son; if she is a daughter, it is the father; if she is a sister, it is the brother, and so on.

It is noteworthy that in some instances woman receives as equal share in inheritance as man does. For example, if a man passes away and leaves behind two daughters and a brother, every one of the heirs will receive one-third of the estate.

However, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that Christianity has no laws that arrange the issue of inheritance. In Egypt, Christians apply the Islamic law of inheritance. In Judaism, the husband inherits his wife, while the wife does not inherit her husband. Moreover, the mother, according to the Jewish law, does not inherit her son or daughter.

As to the issue of *Hijab* of the Muslim woman, I wonder how could you criticize and despise the Muslim woman's decency! Let us examine what your Holy Book says in this regard. In *Timothy*, we read the following:

"I also want woman to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with

good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God."

(1 *Timothy* 2: 9-10)

Now, I would like to shed light on the issue of polygamy (plurality of wives) and polyandry (plurality of husbands). Polygamy is permitted in Islam while polyandry is absolutely forbidden.

In Islam, polygamy is permissible under certain conditions and circumstances. It is a conditional permission, and not an Article of Faith or a matter of necessity. This permission is valid with a maximum of four wives. Also, this permission is an exception to the ordinary course. It is the last resort, the final attempt to solve some social and moral problems, and to deal with inevitable difficulties. In short, it is an emergency measure, and it should be confined to this sense only.

[T. The Qur'anic verse relevant to the subject reads as follows:

﴿وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلاَّ تُقْسِطُوا فِي الْيَتَامَى فَانكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُم مِّنَ النِّسَاءِ مَثْنَى وَثُلاثَ وَرُبَاعَ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلاَّ تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ذَلِكَ أَدْنَى أَلاَّ تَعُولُوا (٣)﴾ [النساء]

﴿*If ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, marry women of your choice, two, or three, or four; but if ye fear that*

ye shall not be able to deal justly (with them). Then only one, or (a captive) that your right hands possess. That will be more suitable, to prevent you from doing injustice.﴾

(An-Nisa':3)

This Qur'anic verse was revealed after the Battle of Uhud (3 AH) in which many Muslims were killed, leaving behind widows and orphans for whom due care was incumbent upon the Muslim survivors. Marriage was one way of protecting those widows and orphans. The Glorious Qur'an made this warning and gave that choice to protect the rights of the orphans and prevent the guardians from doing injustice to their dependants.

With this background it is now apparent that Islam did not invent polygamy. Also, it did not abolish it because if it had been abolished, that would have been in theory only, and people would have continued the practice as is observed today among other peoples whose constitutions and social standards do not approve polygamy. Islam came to be enforced, to be lived, to be practiced, and not to stay is suspense or to be regarded as a mere theory. It is realistic and its outlook on life is most practicable.]

However, it is not correct that Judaism and Christianity have always been monogamous or

categorically opposed to polygamy. Until the mid of 7th century AC, the Church used to permit polygamy.

[T. In his *Jews and Arabs: Their Contracts Through the Ages* (New York, Schoken Books, 1964 AC, pp. 184-185), the prominent Jewish scholar S. D. Goitein informed us that polygamous Jewish immigrants cause the Israeli housing authorities much difficulty and embarrassment. The position of the Christian Mormons is well known. So is the view of the Afro-Asian bishops who prefer polygamy to infidelity, fornication, and mate swapping. In the United States alone, mate swappers are estimated to number hundreds of thousands.]

As to the prohibition of polyandry in Islam, it suits the sound human nature and is so applicable in most parts of the globe that I wonder how you could raise this question! Do you permit this practice in your city! Woman, in fact, is like a pot; could we put two opposites in a single pot! The tradition of polyandry was known before the advent of Islam, and now in some primary and uncluttered places of the world, but Islam absolutely forbade it.

As to your question about the prohibition of a Muslim woman's getting married to a non-Muslim man, it seems strange for the Christian

law regards difference in religion as a factor that invalidates the bond of marriage. In Christianity, moreover, the Orthodox is not permitted to marry from amongst the Catholics.

Islam, in contrast, permits a Muslim man to marry a Christian or Jewish woman, but it does not allow a Muslim woman to get married to a Christian or Jewish man. There are sound reasons for this difference that go as follows:

Man is the head of the house, the one who maintains the family, and he is responsible for his wife. While Islam guarantees freedom of belief and practice to the Christian or the Jewish wife of a Muslim, Judaism and Christianity do not guarantee the wife of a different faith freedom of belief and practice. Nor do they safeguard her rights. Since this is the case, how can Islam take chances of the future of the daughters by giving them into the hands of people who neither honor their religion, nor are concerned to protect their rights?

A marriage between a man and woman of different faiths can be based only on the husband's respect for his wife's beliefs; otherwise a good relationship can never develop. Now, the Muslim believes that both Judaism and Christianity originated in divine revelation, although later distortions were introduced into them. He also

believes that Allah revealed the Torah to Moses and the Gospel to Jesus, and that both Moses and Jesus (peace and blessings of Allah be upon them) were among the Messengers of Allah. Accordingly, the Christian or the Jewish wife of a Muslim lives under the protection of a man who respects the basic tenets of her faith, her scripture, and her prophets. While in contrast to this, the Jew or Christian recognizes neither the divine origin of Islam, nor its Book, nor its Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). How then could a Muslim woman live with such a man, while her religion requires of her the observance of certain acts of worship, duties, and obligations, as well as certain prohibitions? It would be impossible for the Muslim woman to retain her respect for her beliefs as well as to practice her religion properly if she were opposed in this regard by the master of the house.

The Ninth Question

Q. Your Book, the Qur'an, calls to fornication, even the prophet Lut encouraged fornication, saying, as the Qur'an, states, *﴾O my people here are my daughters: they are purer for you.﴿ (Hud:78)*

A. Your question is groundless. The Glorious Qur'an, as a matter of fact, is the Book that calls to good ethics, brings Muslims up on morality, and leads them to a civilization that introduces welfare and prosperity to the whole world.

In this connection, I would like to recall some sayings published by some of your writers. George Bernard Show, for example, says: "The religion of Muhammad caught my esteem because of its astonishing vitality. It is the only religion, I think, that can deal with all aspects of life. I have predicted that the religion of Muhammad would be passable in Europe tomorrow. Today, it has become passable therein. In the Medieval Ages, the clergies intentionally defamed the image of Islam owing to their ignorance and abhorred prejudice. But, I see that Muhammad should be called the savior of the world. I believe, furthermore, that if a man like Muhammad is

charged with the leadership of the modern world, he will succeed in solving all its problems and spreading peace and prosperity all over the world." In the 19th century, some fair-minded thinkers – such as Goethe, Carlyle, and Gibbon - have acquainted themselves with the significance of Muhammad's religion and so Europe changed its attitude towards Islam. In this century, Europe commenced to love the faith of Muhammad and numerous numbers of Europeans converted to Islam. Accordingly, we can say that the conversion of Europe to Islam has started.

In fact, I have never read about an obscenity like that which you depict Prophets with. In *Genesis*, for example, we read that Noah drank wine and so he became drunk and his private parts got uncovered (Gen. 9). Also, the two daughters of Lut made him drink wine until he became drunk. Then, he has had sexual intercourse with the elder one at one night and the younger at the second. As a result, both his daughters became pregnant.

Your claim, however, is based on ignorance of the language of the Glorious Qur'an, which says,

﴿... يَا قَوْمِ هَؤُلاءِ بَنَاتِي هُنَّ أَطْهَرُ لَكُمْ ...﴾ [هود: ٧٨]

﴿*... O my people here are my daughters: they are purer for you...*﴾

(Hud: 78)

Then how could you claim that the above Qur'anic verse calls to fornication, while it says 'they are purer for you'! Purity, of course, is the opposite of obscenity and so they both cannot be gathered in one position. On the above Qur'anic verse, Lut (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) invited his people to get married to his daughters, i.e., all daughters of his people, for this will be purer for them than fornication or sodomy.

The Tenth Question

Q. Your God, according to the Qur'an, is the one who guides people or leads them astray. Then, why does he punish man permanently in the Fire?

A. If we seriously ponder your question, we will conclude that it reflects the denial of both the Fire and Paradise, for punishment and rewarding in the Hereafter will be meaningless as long as wrong-doing and good-doing are predetermined by Allah. Logically, the denial of the Fire necessitates the denial of Paradise.

Islam, however, adopts the principle that deep-rooted faith should be founded on reason, reflection, and wisdom, saying,

﴿وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي يَنْعِقُ بِمَا لاَ يَسْمَعُ إِلاَّ دُعَاءً وَنِدَاءً صُمٌّ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ لاَ يَعْقِلُونَ (١٧١)﴾ [البقرة]

﴿*The parable of those who reject Faith is as if one were to shout like a goat-herd, to things that listen to nothing but call and cries: deaf, dumb, and blind, they are void of wisdom.*﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 171)

The more one ponders the creation, the more unswerving belief in Allah, the Creator, he attains.

In fact, I wonder that does the questioner deny the will of man, the idea of fatalism, or both?

The Glorious Qur'an admits the Divine predestination and man's will. This admission is obvious in the following Qur'anic verse,

﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِن يُضِلُّ مَن يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَن يَشَاءُ وَلَتُسْأَلُنَّ عَمَّا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (٩٣)﴾ [النحل]

﴿*If Allah so willed, He could make you all one people: but He leaves straying whom He pleases, but ye shall certainly be called to account for all your actions.*﴾

(An-Nahl: 93)

Therefore, the Glorious Qur'an rejects the excuses of the sinners who claim that Divine predestination leads them to commit sins. This principle is assured in more than one Qur'anic verse as follows:

﴿سَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَشْرَكْنَا وَلاَ آبَاؤُنَا وَلاَ حَرَّمْنَا مِن شَيْءٍ كَذَلِكَ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ حَتَّى ذَاقُوا بَأْسَنَا قُلْ هَلْ عِندَكُم مِّنْ عِلْمٍ فَتُخْرِجُوهُ لَنَا إِن تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلاَّ الظَّنَّ وَإِنْ أَنتُمْ إِلاَّ تَخْرُصُونَ (١٤٨)﴾ [الأنعام]

﴿*Those who give partners (to Allah) will say: 'if Allah had wished, we should not have given partners to Him, nor would our fathers; nor should we have had any taboos.' So did their ancestors argue falsely, until they tasted of Our wrath. Say: Have ye any (certain) knowledge? If so, produce it before us. Ye follow nothing but conjecture: ye do nothing but lie.*﴾

(Al-An`am: 148)

﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا عَبَدْنَا مِن دُونِهِ مِن شَيْءٍ نَّحْنُ وَلاَ آبَاؤُنَا وَلاَ حَرَّمْنَا مِن دُونِهِ مِن شَيْءٍ كَذَلِكَ فَعَلَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ فَهَلْ عَلَى الرُّسُلِ إِلاَّ الْبَلاغُ الْمُبِينُ (٣٥)﴾ [النحل]

﴿*The worshippers of false gods say: 'If Allah had so willed, we should not have worshipped aught but Him - neither we nor our fathers – nor should we have prescribed prohibitions other than His.' So did those who went before them. But what is the mission of messengers but to preach the Clear Message?*﴾

(An-Nahl: 35)

﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ أَنفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ قَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنُطْعِمُ مَن لَّوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ أَطْعَمَهُ إِنْ أَنتُمْ إِلاَّ فِي ضَلالٍ مُّبِينٍ (٤٧)﴾ [يس]

﴿*And when they are told: 'Spend ye of (the bounties) with which Allah has provided you,'*

the Unbelievers say to those who believe: Shall we then feed those whom, if Allah had so willed, He would have fed, (Himself)? Ye are in nothing but manifest Error.﴾

(Yasin: 47)

﴿وَقَالُوا لَوْ شَاءَ الرَّحْمَنُ مَا عَبَدْنَاهُم مَّا لَهُم بِذَلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ هُمْ إِلاَّ يَخْرُصُونَ (٢٠)﴾ [الزخرف]

﴿*(Ah!) They say, 'If it had been the Will of (Allah) Most Gracious, we should not have worshipped such (deities)!' Of that they have no knowledge! They do nothing but lie!*﴾

(Az-Zukhruf: 20)

Undoubtedly, people of sound thinking realize that this world comprises both Divine predestination and man's will. Man, for example, has no will in creating his body and organs whereas he has perfect will in certain matters: Eating, drinking, sleeping, laboring, playing, learning, teaching, etc. Therefore, he shoulders the responsibility of his own actions.

In his well-known *Risalat At-Tawhid*, the outstanding Muslim scholar, sheikh Muhammad `Abdu said, "As people of sound thinking witness that they are existent and so they are in no need of proving this fact, they witness that they have an undeniable *will* regarding the optional acts. Thereupon, they do, or refrain from doing, these acts intentionally."

Now, let us reflect on the following Biblical quotation that deals with the question of Divine predestination and man's will:

"The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore, God gave them over the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things instead of the Creator – who is praised forever. Amen. Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and

were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion."

(*Romans* 1: 18-27)

Accordingly, the Glorious Qur'an, which adopts the principle of the Divine predestination as well as man's will, does not contradict other heavenly-revealed religions.

In conclusion, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that Muslims' unswerving belief in the Divine predestination and in their accountability for their actions lead them to carry out their duties in order to spread goodness, welfare, justice, and morality all over the world. In this way the early Muslims have founded their golden civilization that influenced the whole world for more than a thousand years.

The Eleventh Question

Q. Could you answer the following questions:

What is the wisdom behind our creation? You say we are created to worship Allah; is Allah in need of our worship? Why have we been created, granted life, led to sufferings, and then eternally decreed to dwell in the Fire? Is this justice? The idea of "transmigration of souls" is the logical reply to this question for it comprises mercy and is in tune with God's mercy, the God who does not aspire to revenge.

A. In fact, I wonder whether those questioners are adherents of heavenly-revealed religions or man-made systems! If they adhere to a heavenly-revealed religion, they will inevitably reject the idea of "Transmigration of souls" for all Divine religions regard belief in the bliss of souls in Paradise or their torment in the Fire as prerequisite of one's faith.

No one, according to the Glorious Qur'an, knows the reality of the "soul". Only Allah, the Creator, knows its very nature and reality. The idea of "Transmigration of souls" is refuted by the Glorious Qur'an when it unequivocally proclaims,

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَتَوَفَّاكُم بِاللَّيْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا جَرَحْتُم بِالنَّهَارِ ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُكُمْ فِيهِ لِيُقْضَى أَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (٦٠) وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ وَيُرْسِلُ عَلَيْكُمْ حَفَظَةً حَتَّى إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا وَهُمْ لاَ يُفَرِّطُونَ (٦١) ثُمَّ رُدُّوا إِلَى اللَّهِ مَوْلاَهُمُ الْحَقِّ أَلاَ لَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَهُوَ أَسْرَعُ الْحَاسِبِينَ (٦٢)﴾ [الأنعام]

﴿It is He Who doth take your souls by night, and hath knowledge of all that ye have done by day: by day doth He raise you up again; that a term appointed be fulfilled; in the end unto Him will be your return; then will He show you the truth of all that ye did. He is the irresistible, (watching) from above over His worshippers, and He sets guardians over you. At length, when death approaches one of you, Our angels take his soul, and they never fail in their duty. Then are men returned unto Allah, their Protector, the (only) reality: is not His the command? And He is the swiftest in taking account.﴾

(Al-An`am: 60-62)

In your Holy Book, likewise, the idea of "Transmigration of souls" is nullified. To illustrate this, let us reflect on the following Biblical quotation:

"I, John, your brother and companion in suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of

Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, which said, 'Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches ... After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, 'Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.' At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it..."

(*Revelation* 1, 2, 3, 4)

In the above quotation, John described what he saw in heaven when he became Spirit and ascended to the throne. Accordingly, the idea of "Transmigration of souls" has no place in the heavenly-revealed religions.

Transmigration of Souls

"Transmigration of souls" means the passing of a person's soul after death into another body, human or animal. As a doctrine, it can be traced back to ancient cultures. It was known in ancient Egypt and was prevalent in ancient India where it was adopted by Brahmanism. "Transmigration", according to Brahman-ism, is based on the idea of man's wretchedness in life since man in his first life undergoes many sufferings and

tribulations and in his second life – when he dies and his soul passes into another body – he will unwillingly face more hardships and trials. In addition to his wretchedness, he will be held accountable for his actions though he has no will in doing them.

Therefore, the adherents of Brahmanism see that salvation of man consists in seclusion, renunciation of work, and reflection on the creation. By doing so, man will become Brahman.

Now, I wonder: do you, O missionaries, call to the above means of salvation, namely seclusion, renunciation of work, and reflection on the creation!

Moreover, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that "Transmigration of souls" may be effected through passing the soul into a lower body, and thus the soul will continue passing into other lower bodies until it ends up in the Fire. In this way, the idea of "Transmigration of souls" does not save the sinful man from the Fire. In addition, the passing of the soul into a lower body – dog, donkey, etc. – humiliates it.

As to your question regarding the wisdom behind the creation of man, it is an instinctive question. Ignorance of the answer of this question leads to the destruction and crookedness of man. Through my contact with some Westerners, I have concluded that most of them are of two

categories due to their ignorance of the answer of this question:

1- Some of them lead a miserable life which, in many cases, ends in suicide.

2- Others search for the answer to this question and when they find it in Islam, they embrace it.

The Glorious Qur'an, however, answers this question in more than one verse as follows:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لاَ تَعْلَمُونَ (٣٠) وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى المَلائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلاءِ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (٣١) قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لاَ عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلاَّ مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ العَلِيمُ الحَكِيمُ (٣٢) قَالَ يَا آدَمُ أَنْبِئْهُم بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ فَلَمَّا أَنْبَأَهُم بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُل لَّكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ (٣٣)﴾ [البقرة]

﴿Behold, thy Lord said to the angels: 'I will create a vicegerent on earth.' They said: 'Wilt Thou place therein one who will make mischief therein and shed blood? - Whilst we do celebrate Thy praises and glorify Thy holy (name)?' He said: 'I know what ye know not.' And He taught Adam the names of all things;

then He placed them before the angels, and said: 'Tell Me the names of these if ye are right.' They said: 'Glory be to Thee: of knowledge we have none, save what Thou hast taught us: in truth it is Thou Who art perfect in knowledge and wisdom.' He said: 'O Adam! Tell them their names.' When he had told them, Allah said: 'Did I not tell you that I know the secrets of heaven and earth, and I know what ye reveal and what ye conceal?'﴾

(Al-Baqarah: 30-33)

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالإِنسَ إِلاَّ لِيَعْبُدُونِ (٥٦)﴾ [الذاريات]

﴿*I have only created Jinns and men, that they may serve Me.*﴾

(Adh-Dhariyat: 56)

﴿وَإِلَى ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَالِحاً قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ هُوَ أَنشَأَكُم مِّنَ الأَرْضِ وَاسْتَعْمَرَكُمْ فِيهَا فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ ثُمَّ تُوبُوا إِلَيْهِ إِنَّ رَبِّي قَرِيبٌ مُّجِيبٌ (٦١)﴾ [هود]

﴿*To the Thamud people (We sent) Salih, one of their own brethren. He said, 'O my people worship Allah: ye have no other god but Him. It is He Who hath produced you from the earth and settled you therein: then ask forgiveness of Him, and turn to Him: for my Lord is near, ready to answer.*﴾

(Hud: 61)

Accordingly, man is created to be Allah's vicegerent on earth, to cultivate the land, and to worship Allah, Most High.

It is noteworthy that worship, in Islam, is not restricted to ritual acts such as Prayer, Fasting, Pilgrimage, etc. Rather, it encompasses all requirements of vicegerency on earth. Some outstanding Muslim scholars define "*worship*" as knowledge of Allah. This view is maintained by the fact that the first revealed Qur'anic verse was:

﴿اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ (١)﴾ [العلق]

﴿*Read! In the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who created.*﴾

(Al-`Alaq: 1)

And, the second verse was:

﴿ن وَالْقَلَمِ وَمَا يَسْطُرُونَ (١)﴾ [القلم]

﴿*Nun. By the Pen and by the (Record) which (men) write...*﴾

(Al-Qalam: 1)

This is the answer presented by Islam to your question. Then, could you tell us the answer according to your Holy Book?

The Twelfth Question

Q. If your religion, Islam, had been the true religion of God, we would not have seen weakness, helplessness, and hypocrisy in the Muslim scholars!

A. Here, it is sufficient to refer you to the answer of the fourth question where you can find an allembracing answer to the above question.

Moreover, I would like to draw your attention to two technical mistakes in your question:

First: You apply the principle of generalization to partial instances and, as a result, reach wrong con-clusions. No doubt, history has witnessed, and still witnesses, many Muslim scholars who are distinguished by their courage, faithfulness, and fair-mindedness.

As to those whom you allude to in your question, they are overpowered by the tyranny and oppression of their rulers. So, they seem very weak and helpless.

If you apply the principle of generalization to Christians, you will inevitably despise all Christians. For the misbehavior and wrong-doing presented by the clergies for hundreds of

years to the extent that some of them used to unfairly collaborate with the rulers claiming that those rulers were granted authority by God. Filmer, for example, claimed this divine right arguing that people are created to serve their rulers.

Second: You ought to ask about the causes of these bad characters, not to raise doubts about the morals of Muslim scholars in general. Islam, in fact, calls to good morals and fights immorality. By the same token, your question should be raised as follows: why do some Muslims commit what their religion forbids?

The Thirteenth Question

Q. We live in the age of technology, progression, and science; and you claim that Islam is a religion of civilization, science, and progression whereas we see Muslims differ on deciding the beginning of the lunar months, particularly the month of Ramadan. Then, how do you claim that Islam is a religion of progression and science?

A. I have previously pointed out that Islam calls to science, reason, and progression. Also, I have explained the undeniable role that Islam has played to drive Europe from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge.

I wonder, however, why did not you apply your critical approach to the Catholic Church when it rejected the scientific theories and killed, even burnt alive, scholars and scientists!

As to the issue of deciding the beginning of the lunar months, it is an astronomical phenomenon and no man is entitled to control the course of the moon and the sun for they follow the course set to them by Allah, Most High.

No man can determine the exact time for the rising or setting of the sun in the whole world for

when the sun rises on a certain part, it sets in another part. The same is true for the moon. Times of Prayers, in Islam, are set according to the movement of the sun. By the same token, in a single moment there may be some people performing the Dawn (*Fajr*) Prayer while others – in another part of the world – perform the Sunset (*Maghrib*) Prayer and so on. Do you regard this as a manifestation of progression or backwardness?

As to your question about the Muslims' difference on deciding the beginning of Ramadan, it is based on a juristic disagreement. Some Muslim scholars, on the one hand, hold the opinion that seeing the new moon in one locality or area makes fasting binding only on the residents of that area and its surroundings. This group of scholars quoted the following two *ahadith* (Prophetic Traditions) in support of their stance:

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said,

> *"Fast when you see it (the new moon for Ramadan) and break fast when you see it (the new moon for Shwwal). And if the weather is cloudy, calculate it (the month of Sha`ban) as thirty days."*

(Reported by Al-Bukhari)

"We are unlettered people, ... the month is such and such (meaning twenty-nine or thirty nights)."

Other scholars, on the other hand, are of the opinion that if the moon is seen anywhere, fasting becomes mandatory for all Muslims who have access to this piece of information. They base their stance on the fact that the above cited two *ahadith* address Muslims in general, regardless of where they live. This enhances Muslim unity.

The division of the Islamic world into diverse countries and republics governed by different rulers .lead to the continuity of Muslims' differences on deciding the beginning of Ramadan, as well as the other lunar months that are related to certain religious rituals. However, this difference will disappear when Muslims unite under the rule of one governor, Caliph.

It is noteworthy that some Islamic countries depend upon the modern technologies and astronomical calculations in monitoring the new moon. Egypt, the country of Al-Azhar, is the best example in this regard.

Some early Muslim scholars, furthermore, have held the opinion that the beginning of the month of Fasting, i.e., Ramadan, should be decided according to the astronomical calculations. Even in case of conflict between the natural

seeing of the new moon and the astronomical calculations, the latter takes priority over the former.

Thus, the Muslims' difference on deciding the beginning of the lunar months is not based on backwardness or rejection of modern sciences. Rather, it accounts for people's different traits and talents in understanding the significance and meaning of the texts, whether religious or secular. In this way, some people sticks to the literal meaning of texts while others adhere to the deep meaning thereof. This phenomenon is widespread in all religions and cultures, and so it cannot be a basis for defaming the image of Islam or depicting Muslims as narrow-minded and uncultured people.

Conclusion

In fact, I was in no need of writing this book, but what activated me were the insults made by those Christian missionaries in New York and their cunning to defame the image of Islam and raise doubts about the authenticity of Islam.

Also, I was in no need of holding any caparisons between Islam and other religions, or between Muslims and other peoples for we, Muslims, are divinely commanded to esteem other beliefs. Yet, in case of study and analysis, we are asked to be fair-minded and faithful and to argue with others following the Islamic ethics of argument.

I hope this work and what it reveals of the defects and corruption of other religions and systems would lead non-Muslims to reflect on their own stance first and not to attack Muslims thinking that no one knows their corruption and defects. Rather, Muslim scholars are well-acquainted with the defects of other religions, but they never start attacking others except when the latter start doing so.

Likewise, I hope this work would stress the importance of getting ourselves aquatinted with the reality of other cultures and religions so as

to know the glittering aspects of Islam and to be firm enough to defend it.

In conclusion, I would like to highlight the Qur'anic verse that deals with the relation between Muslim and non-Muslims:

﴿لاَ يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُم
مِّن دِيَارِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ (٨)
إِنَّمَا يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ قَاتَلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَأَخْرَجُوكُم مِّن
دِيَارِكُمْ وَظَاهَرُوا عَلَى إِخْرَاجِكُمْ أَن تَوَلَّوْهُمْ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَأُوْلَئِكَ
هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ (٩)﴾ [الممتحنة]

﴿*Allah forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for Allah loveth those who are just. Allah only forbids you, with regard to those who fight you for (your) Faith, and drive you out of your homes, and support (others) in driving you out, from turning to them (for friendship and protection). It is such as turn to them (in these circumstances), that do wrong.*﴾

(Al-Mumtahinah: 8-9)

May Allah guide us to the Straight Path!

Dar Al-Manarah

For Translation, Publishing & Distribution
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E.mail: almanarah400@hotmail.com
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Dar Al Kotob Library Number: 2000 / 17041
I.S.B.N 977 – 6005 – 06- 3